

MATTATHIAS

AND OTHER POEMS



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MATTATHIAS

AND OTHER POEMS

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AND OTHER POEMS

BY

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CANON OF SOUTHWELL, AND LATE RECTOR OF
DARLEY DALE, DERBYSHIRE

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

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MATTATHIAS

B.C. 168

As breaks in young November
 A brief bright summer's day,
And the gold and russet woodlands
 Put on their best array,
Outvying the sheen of their midsummer green
 In the splendour of decay ;
And again the autumnal fogs roll up
 Quenching the transient gleam,
And the sodden leaves drop silently
 And whirl down the swollen stream,
And the glory that flashed for a moment is dashed
 And melts like a morning dream ;

Or as on the far horizon
 To the wanderer's straining eye
The palms of a dim oasis have shown
 Against the shimmering sky,
And once more he has faced the treacherous waste
 Full of hope that his bourn is nigh ;
And lo, he has come, and the vision is nought
 But a speck in the boundless plain,

And sorely bestead he must still struggle on
In weariness, thirst, and pain,
Through the restless land where the King of the Sand
With silence divides his reign ;
So bright, so brief, the triumph
In the Hebrew annals stored,
When the Hasmonæan heroes
Unsheathed their patriot sword
To plead the cause of the Heaven-breathed laws
For the kingdom of the LORD—
An oasis in the desert,
A gleam in the winter sky,
A passionate stroke of the zeal that awoke
In the ages long gone by—
A stirring of breath in the chambers of Death,
One gasp ere the doomed one die.

There came a voice to Modin,
A message short and stern,
It touched all hearts with shame, and made
All cheeks with anger burn ;
Like glowing iron it scathed the ears
Of every freeborn man ;
A Grecian Envoy bore it,
And thus the summons ran :—
The word of King Antiochus—
“Hearken, ye rebel Jews
Your duty slacks ; dare ye my wrath,
My patience still abuse ?

Who owns me for his sovereign lord
This homage let him pay :
Upon the altar of my gods
He shall sacrifice to-day."

Then up stood Mattathias,
His kindling eyes afire,
Five noble sons stood by his side—
Sons worthy such a sire ;
A Hebrew of the Hebrews,
Of Aaron's priestly line,
No grander champion of the truth
Was in all Palestine.
With his right hand to Heaven upraised
In sign of plighted troth,
He swore by Him whom scathless none
Calls witness to false oath—
" Not though all other men on earth
Should do this traitorous deed,
Unto the Macedonian dog
Will I and mine give heed :
God of our father Abraham,
Thee only will I serve,
Our Israel's Hope, from Thy commands
How can—how dare I swerve ?
As I this day dishonour Thee
Or bravely Thee confess,
So unto me and mine do Thou
In our last dire distress ! "

He spoke, and through the craven throng
A thrill of courage flew along.
As all one way when the North blows strong
The ocean depths are heaved,
So fled before that presence bold
The panic that all hearts controlled,
By one flash undeceived.
No more the heroic acts of old
Lived but in tales oft proudly told :
A nation long to slavery sold
Those boasts had scarce believed ;
But now such heat where all were cold
Seemed victory half-achieved.

A murmur swelling, dying again,
Like the gusts of a rising breeze,
When there's scarce a sound in the lower ground
But a stir in the highest trees—
A murmur, then grim silence,
Like the hush of a sultry sky
When it asks no store of prophetic lore
To forecast that a tempest's nigh :—
So silent awhile the Jews remained,
With lips compressed and passion restrained,
Each keen and alert as a mastiff unchained
As he waits for his master's cry ;
And all hearts were athrob for what should betide,
While every man glared on the friend at his side
With a fixt close-questioning eye.

Hard by the place of gathering
The wanton Macedonian king
 Had reared, in Heaven's despite,
An alien altar ; and no hand
Durst root it from the sacred land,
For force nor usage could withstand
 The usurper's lawless might.
And thus—a piercing shame and sting—
That fateful day the hated thing,
All loyal hearts envenoming,
 Stood full in Israel's sight.

Then loud and fierce the Captain's voice
 In threatening tones was heard—
“ Ye stubborn slaves, make instant choice,
 I speak no second word ;
Think ye the king of sea and land
Sends but to parley, not command ?
Come all—and thou, old man, come first ;
Bring swine's flesh—ought your laws have cursed.”

Then, as by demon spurred,
When all unmoved he saw them stand—
Hot rage to frantic fury fanned—
On his broad sword he laid his hand ;
 But not a Hebrew stirred.

Now shame upon the coward—
 Happy in this alone
That only his foul infamy
 And not his name is known—

Shame on that nameless dastard
Whose deed I now proclaim ;
And unto him whose wrath sublime
(A Phineas of this later time)
Wrought righteous vengeance on the crime
Be an undying name !

Before the eyes of Jew and Greek,
As who would fain prime honour seek
Of a new priestly line,
There came a cringing Hebrew wretch
And on the altar dared to stretch
The sacrificial swine.
O God of Israel, slumberest Thou ?
Shall Thine own sons to idols bow
And Thou be patient still—where now
Is that red arm of Thine ?

Old Mattathias eyed the crowd
A moment with disdain
To see that monstrous deed allowed,
And o'er his brow there swept a cloud
Of noble rage and pain ;
Then, looking up to Heaven, he vowed
That blood should purge the stain.
And as the strong fierce sentence fell
The Hebrews heard their foemen's knell ;
Needed no voice from Heaven to tell
The blood would flow amain ;

For well they knew that nought would let
The settled purpose of his threat,
Where once that steadfast mind was set
 There wont it to remain,
No prayers could bribe it to forget,
 No fear its fire restrain ;
Old Mattathias never yet
 Was known to speak in vain.

Nor lingered long the fell intent
Whereon his burning soul was bent ;
For sudden as the lightning-stroke
That splinters some tall forest oak
 In a loud summer storm,
At once his voice in thunder spoke
And the swift flash of fury broke
 On that base grovelling form—
“So,” cried he, “the apostate dies
Who dares his fathers’ God despise !”—
And, mingling with the sacrifice,
Quenching the flame ere it could rise,
 Gushed out the life-blood warm.

As when some spectre of the night
Strikes the beholder with affright
 And palsies every limb ;—
He cannot move, he dare not cry,
But glowers with fascinated eye
 Upon the phantom grim ;—

Such terror did that onslaught strike
On Pagan and on Jew alike.
With shame and conscience-smitten awe
The vacillating Hebrews saw
 Their kinsman's stern appeal ;
His pleading left no room for flaw
 Who reasoned with sharp steel ;
Nor sword to avenge their master's law
Durst the cowed Macedonians draw,
Slower the night's last snowflakes thaw
 When morn's warm touch they feel,
Than died their courage as they gazed
Dumbstruck, confounded, and amazed,
 Fronting such fiery zeal—
To find at last one lingering trace
Of manhood in that trampled race,
 It had been less surprise
If in some mouldered burying-place
 The swaddled dead should rise,
And anger clothe each bony face
 And flash from the hollow eyes.

O holy Truth, what power is thine
 The human heart to nerve,
Strengtheners of all who at thy shrine.
 And in thy battles serve ;
Though falsehood mailed from heel to crest,
And myriad-fold, thy fort invest,
Who has thee for his bosom-guest
 Shall never blench nor swerve.

Before brave Mattathias' eye,
Blazing with holy jealousy
For God's and Israel's sake,
The Grecian warriors stood aghast,
As on them—like a tempest-blast
That sweeps some mountain-lake,
When bellowing through a narrow rift
It churns the waves and hurls the drift
In many a twisted flake—
So terrible, so wild, so swift
His garnered fury brake.

Upon the Captain of the band
Fell first the ruthless champion's brand ;
He reeled and wallowed in the sand
Unpitied and unmourned :
Apelles was that Captain's name,
Fated to live in evil fame
Where Freedom still asserts her claim,
And tyranny is scorned.
Then on the startled Grecian crew
Swift-bounding, lion-like, he flew,
And one, split through the head, he slew,
And one he dashed to ground ;
So through the guard, to right and left
Hewing his way, a path he cleft
Up to the altar-mound ;
Nor slacked his hand till stone by stone
The accurséd heap lay overthrown ;—
Then turned and faced the crowd alone,
Darting his gaze around.

“Now, men of Israel,” he cried,
“Stand forth who on JEHOVAH’S side
Will range yourselves with me !
Will ye dare see His laws despised,
Will ye to these uncircumcised
Still bend the unmanly knee ?
Where Joshua’s conquering pennons waved,
Where David every danger braved,
And tribute wrung from kings enslaved,
Will ye be less than free ?
Nay, up ! and from His people saved
To God shall glory be !—
O Thou who in the ancient days
To Israel’s sons didst ever raise
A saviour in their need,
I feel Thy call within me now ;
This vengeful ire, this burning brow,
’Tis Thou hast kindled them, ’tis Thou
Hast fired my heart, my tongue, to vow
That till this land be freed—
This Sacred Land which Thou hast blest—
And till I see her wrongs redrest,
Nor eye shall sleep, nor arm shall rest,
Nor joys of life be mine ;
What joy, what rest, what peace can be
While men revile and rail on Thee,
Yea, dare the awful Majesty
That shrouds Thy hallowed Shrine ?
With filthy rites and orgies wild
Thy holy precincts are defiled ;

Zion herself, Thy home, lies waste ;
Her beauteous House, where Thou hadst placed
Thy Name, with idols is debased ;

Thy recreant sons bow down
To Astarté and Olympian Zeus,
And shameless wear in festal use

The bestial wine-god's crown !
O God, our fathers' faithful God,
Break Thou this impious tyrant's rod—

So shall our land's renown
Revive ; and, cleansed from this foul stain,
Sweet peace shall Zion see again

The coming days unfold ;
When on Thy barriers all in vain
Her foes shall hurl their last disdain,
And Thou, and Thou alone, shalt reign
As in the days of old."

Then, lifting up on high his sword,
As though he lent it to the LORD,

He turned ; and, to the sky
Pointing, he cried with mighty voice—
"This day, this hour, with one accord,
Ye sons of Israel, seal your choice

Before God's holy eye !
Our cause is His, His strength our aid ;
Fear ye not, then, nor be dismayed.
Let trumpets peal from every hill
To sound the loud alarm,
That every patriot's heart may thrill

With courage and devoted will,
And all the land may arm ;
Let beacon fires proclaim afar
The tidings of a Sacred War,
And instant prayer through all our coasts
Rise up to the great LORD of hosts
From whom all victories are.
All ye, JEHOVAH'S badge who wear,
His covenant-sign, stand forth and share
The glorious task to do and dare,
With me to dare and die ! ”

He spoke, and straightway led the van ;
And to his standard, man by man,
They flocked from far and nigh.
First rallied to their father's side
His noble sons, their nation's pride—
While princely deeds in fame abide
Their names shall still survive :—
John, the old chieftain's eldest born ;
Simon, whose name no tongue shall scorn
Where Freedom's triumphs thrive ;
Judas, whose conquests fill the page
Of that grand Maccabean age ;
The astute priest-soldier Jonathan ;
And Eleazar “ Avaran,”
First martyr of the five.

To follow with such leadership,
Whose praises hung on every lip,
Each loyal Jew would fain outstrip
His keenest comrade's zeal ;

All hearts caught fire and wildly burned,
As quick expectancy discerned

The dawn of Israel's weal.

As spreads the blaze when lightning strikes
Some broad fen-wheatfield's ripened spikes,
And crimsons all the boundary dykes,

So sped the bold appeal ;
From every corner of the land,
With weapons such as eye or hand
Could at a moment's call command,

They swarmed tumultuously—
“ War ! War ! ”—Let time mature the plan !
Headlong from town and field they ran,
Nor stayed their sudden arms to scan,

But with one patriot cry
As in the day of Midian
Forward they flew, and war began
For God and Liberty.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN

April 11, 1878

PASS to thy rest, good soldier, true and tried,
Thy rest how welcome, and how nobly won ;
That rest for which thou secretly hast sighed
As longs the labourer for the westering sun :
Here wouldst thou none of it, too brave to shun
One call of Duty, well content to bide
The Master's summons. Now, thy labours done,
He calls, and there is rest at eventide.
There will be tears on some rough cheeks to-day, -
Such manly tears as on the perilous slope
Men, in the silence that succeeds the fray,
Shed o'er the leader of the forlorn-hope.
Rest thou henceforth in Christ ; the final test
Still waits, and GOD is just. Pass to thy rest.

INCIDENTS OF THE ZULU
CAMPAIGN

1879

PREFATORY NOTE

THE manuscript of these verses was submitted to Major Chard, V.C., the hero of Rorke's Drift, on his return to England. He kindly sent me a carefully drawn diagram of the position, and remarked that the only divergence that he noticed from the precise facts of the case was in one unimportant detail, so slight that it did not, in his opinion, call for any alteration.

F. A.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH AT ISANDHLÁNA

January 22, 1879

THEY come! they come! Now, Warwickshires, stir
up your British blood!

Wave upon wave they pour, as when a river bursts
its bank;

Resistless as a mountain-burn swirled down in winter-
flood,

The dusky hordes sweep swiftly round:—they've
turned the English flank.

What mettle you are made of 'tis a time to show the
world;

You live in story, Twenty-fourth;—that trust you
dare not waste;—

Remember "Chillianwallah," on the colours there un-
furled—

Those colours have been torn before, but never yet
disgraced!

As when the hunters have drawn off a lion from his
lair

Upon an open plat where he can neither hide nor
flee ;

And proudly he sets up his mane, and red his eye-
balls glare,

And not a man of all his foes so fearless looks as
he :—

Or, as in the mid ocean stands a lonely reef of rock,

And the waters plunge around it, and the howling
tempest sweeps,

But it stands in stubborn hardihood and stems the
fiercest shock,

And hurls the surging billows back in wild and
broken heaps :—

So, like that lion forced to bay—like that storm-beaten
crag—

Awhile stood Pulleine 'midst his men, and held
the foe in check ;

“ Now, steady, lads ! ” the Colonel cried, and pointed
to the flag—

“ We'll keep those colours, Twenty-fourth, or we'll
perish with the wreck ! ”

O mothers in your English homes, there's sorrow in
the air ;

For there's many a brave English heart will beat
its last to-day :

You will see no more those laughing eyes, nor smooth
that golden hair,
And the lips that took your parting kiss ere night
will be trodden clay.

Brave lads! Ay, you will weep for them—for the
heart must have relief;
And a mother is a mother still, if she's something
more beside :
But methinks if you had seen them, that hard thorny
bud of grief
Would have burst into the fragrant bloom of patriotic
pride.

As loud the crested surf rolls in upon an iron coast,
And baffled staggers back, but leaves its foam upon
the shore ;
So stormed those savage warrior-swarms around the
British host,
But of every wave advancing part returned again no
more.

Stand steady, men ! stand steady ! They are more
than ten to one :
But what are odds to Britons ? Think of Balaklava
plain !
Ay, in all lands, from the rising to the setting of
the sun,
Our arms have faced terrific odds ; they can face
them once again.

Great God of battles, help them now! Thou, Thou
alone, canst guard!

The ammunition's failing, and the fire's growing
slack;

And the ranks are in confusion, though they've yielded
not a yard,

And, in ever-narrowing circle penned, they are fight-
ing back to back.

Spirit of Duty, who in war dost ever brightest shine,
Above the smoking carnage thou art soaring calm
and free;

Thou soldier's chiefest glory, thou immortal thing
divine,

The foe can drain our best men's blood, but he
cannot conquer thee!

"Here, Melvill!" cried brave Pulleine, "save the
colours, if you can!"—

And he gave into his trusty charge the regimental
flag—

"The day is lost—good-bye, good-bye—we'll fight
to the last man;

But they'll think of us in England when they see
that riddled rag!"

The Lieutenant grasped the colours, and full furiously
he spurred,

And the Zulus reeled to right and left as he hewed
his passage through.

Then the Colonel's dauntless voice pealed out, like
thunder, his last word—

“Fix bayonets, Twenty-fourth, and die as English
soldiers do!”

Farewell, farewell, brave hearts! the bitter end is
come at length:—

See, the black and savage masses overwhelm our
minished band!

See, they lift their comrades' corpses, and with more
than human strength

They've hurled them on the bayonets, and are grap-
pling hand to hand!

'Tis over!—all is over! But they've sold their lives
full dear,

For the 'swarthy dead are piled around in numbers
none can tell;

And, like a flowery islet in a wide and sullen mere,

Yon narrow ridge of scarlet marks where the British
heroes fell.

They sleep beneath the southern sky: and with her
loveliest robe

Of verdure and fair fragrant shrubs kind Nature
spreads their pall;

And from their graves shall amaranth spring; and
round the fruitful globe

Its seeds on every wind shall float, and quicken
where they fall.

And wherever in the days to come go forth our
British troops

To meet their country's foe in East or West or
South or North,

And all things seem against them, and the stoutest
courage droops,

They shall think of Isandhlána, and the gallant
Twenty-fourth.

THE DEFENCE OF RORKE'S DRIFT

January 22-23, 1879

LEONIDAS, Horatius—proud names in Greece and
Rome—

Pitted against tremendous odds they stood, and
scorned to fly :

Ay, ay ; but, men of England, we have heroes nearer
home ;

We have our Chard and Bromhead, and their names
shall never die.

Come, listen, let me tell once more the tale all Eng-
land knows ;

All England—ay,—the wide world through—all
nations near and far ;

How the day of dark disaster turned to splendour ere
its close,

And a handful of true Englishmen rolled back the
tide of war.

Calm slept the hazy sunlight on the hills around
Rorke's Drift:—

Then rose a sound, a growing sound, a dull low-
thundering tramp
Of hoofs in the southward distance: and spurring hard
and swift,

Two horsemen came at a gallop. “Ho! what
tidings from the camp?”

“To arms! to arms!” the riders cried. “No time
for further news!

Look quick to your defences: they'll be here before
you can—

Round yonder hill they come apace—you've not an
hour to lose;

The camp is sacked, and the convoy are slaughtered
to a man.”

Fast flew the rumour through the place, as fire in
sun-scorched grass.

“Sergeant,” cried Gonville Bromhead, “see the
Hospital secured!”

And forward the two horsemen spurred down to the
river-pass,

Nor spoke, nor reined their foaming steeds, till they
came where the ponts were moored.

Then breathless to the Commandant they told their
hurried tale;

An Engineer Lieutenant he, the young intrepid
Chard:

THE DEFENCE OF RORKE'S DRIFT 25

He heard, but never blenched his eye before their
faces pale ;

“ Look to the ponts,” he calmly said ; “ I go to place
the guard.”

Ah, then was haste—not hurry—for our English heads
are cool ;

And our Engineers are not the men stern Duty's call
to shirk ;

And their ears are quick to the lightest sound of
military rule,

And the hour of deadliest danger is the hour of
steadiest work.

With waggons and rough undergrowth a sudden fort
was planned,

Loopholed the Hospital and Stores, and bonded wall
to wall

With biscuit-tins and mealie-bags—whatever came to
hand ;

And “ Here,” said Chard, “ we'll hold our own, or
here like soldiers fall ! ”

Full loud, I ween, had Vauban laughed to see that
clumsy fort,

With sacks of grain for bastions, and parapets of tin ;
But some by learned books, and some by sudden need,
are taught ;

Boots not to ask which teaches best, but let those
laugh who win.

And woe to him who comes too near that baby-palisade !

No panic there—no trumpet's blare, nor rattling roll
of drum—

But every man is at his post, as calm as on parade ;—

Ha, steady now !—stand to your arms !—see yonder
where they come !

As when a tropic squall has burst across the Indian Sea,
The storm-clouds crash, and the steel-blue flash sets
all the sky aflame,

So with incessant fusilade, and peals of furious glee,

Right down upon that pigmy fort the black bat-
talions came.

Then rang the British rifles with a music all their own,
That sharp melodious unison to the soldier's ear so
blithe ;

And at every ring of the deadly fire the Zulu ranks
were mown,

As the summer fields are levelled by the swish of
the gleaming scythe.

A moment's check—no longer—for the warrior-blacks
are brave ;

Quick rallied are the broken ranks, and dauntless
as at first

Against the loud-tongued fortress swirls again the
headlong wave,

As though by sheer brute force and weight they
would the rampart burst.

THE DEFENCE OF RORKE'S DRIFT 27

But brave, too, are our Engineers: upon their flag
they bear

A legend plain and homely, won by many a daring
deed:

For skill and courage through the world their praise
is "Everywhere;"¹

And ever to the front are they "where Right and
Glory lead."

And brave, too, are our infantry: let France, let
Russia tell

What English linesmen brought to bay against all
odds can do:

These are the men whose fathers in Crimean battles
fell,

Whose grandsires drove Napoleon's guard pell-mell
at Waterloo.

Ay, there's history behind these men; there's pulsing
in their veins

The blood of dauntless heroes who through flood
and cannon's roar

Saved Lucknow, stormed old Delhi's gates, recon-
quered India's plains,

And scathed the human devilry of murder-stained
Cawnpore.

¹ "Ubique," and "Quo Fas et Gloria ducunt," are the mottoes
of the Royal Engineers.

A score of times their rattling hail beat back the
savage hosts :

You might have thought our Englishmen had each
a hundred lives,

As you saw the bleeding, blackened forms stand dogged
at their posts,

Like the fabled salamander which in hottest fire
survives.

And hotter still the fire has grown ; from bush and
rocky ledge,

In front, behind, on either side, fast pours the
leaden storm :

And ever as new gaps are made in the thick-crowded
wedge,

Reserves rush forward from the rear to swell the
exhaustless swarm.

But steady still the rifles ring, and every bullet tells ;

And, whirlwind-like, the murky cloud now back, now
forward sways ;

And all the heavens are lost in smoke, and loud with
frantic yells ;

And still the rifles ring :—O God ! the Hospital's
ablaze !

“The Hospital ! the Hospital !”—not for themselves
that cry,—

But manly fear and sorrow swell in every hero's
breast,

THE DEFENCE OF RORKE'S DRIFT 29

For there are sick and wounded there who helplessly
must die :—

Poor wasps that could not fight nor fly, they've
smoked them in their nest.

Now daylight fades, and deepening shades steal down
on either host,

Yet through the uncertain gloaming still thick pours
the wild attack—

As reckless sailors steer straight in upon an unknown
coast

When the wind is up, and a fitful moon drives dim
through the scudding rack.

Foes worthy of our steel and shot—a race of warriors
born—

Behind their flimsy cowhide-shields, through showers
of whistling lead,

Down into the red jaws of Fate with what high-stepping
scorn

They dance across the pavement of the dying and
the dead !

Straight in upon the rifles' mouths the naked madmen
run ;

They grasp the British bayonets ; they will not be
withstood ;

Bolder than lions, fierce as wolves—as though the
tropic sun

Had burnt beyond the blackened skin into their very
blood.

And now behind the Dragon Range the twilight waned
and died,

And friend from foe they could only know by the
Hospital's lurid glare ;

And the last faint spark gave way to the dark ; but our
men stood side by side,

For never an inch would the brave lads flinch ; and
the dawn came and found them there.

What though it found them weak and worn—in
languor and distress—

Still safe on those beleaguered Stores the British
colours waved :—

So the day of Isandhlána closed in splendour and
success,

Our tarnished name shone bright again : and the
colony was saved.

So may all English soldiers fight, till wars need rage no
more,

And those who live, live honour-crowned, and those
who die, die hard ;

And deep enshrined in England's mind be every man
who bore

The burden and the heat that day with Bromhead
and with Chard !

ON THE DEATH OF THE PRINCE IMPERIAL OF FRANCE

June 1, 1879

THROUGH decades nine of turbid change and chance,
Since from thine ancient line the sceptre passed,
What know'st thou not of Fortune's fickle blast,
King-ruled, mob-ruled, imperial, conquered France ?
Loud restless land of Passion and Romance,
Is now the end ? Or is't the old bombast
That hails Napoleon's death—the best and last—
As pledge of lasting peace and sure advance ?
The days to come will tell us. More secure
Would be our hope, if in thy sons we saw
A sterner sense of duty—self-command—
And lowlier reverence for His righteous law
Who holds all times, all nations, in His hand.
Then might'st thou flourish, and thy peace endure.

ON THE ARRIVAL OF THE *ORONTES*
WITH THE BODY OF THE PRINCE
IMPERIAL

July 11, 1879

SEEST thou yon speck above the Southern verge
Rise on the leaden sky in dim relief?
Slowly her sails and huge black hull emerge :—
Now, England, rise to meet with generous grief
The hapless heir of thy old foemen's chief—
Napoleon—once dread name of Europe's scourge,
Sad symbol now of Glory vain and brief,
Roll out, dull waves, roll out an empire's dirge,
And bear him shoreward through this heaving lane
Of flags half-masted, and heads bare and bowed ;
While the great Duke's own guns ¹ proclaim aloud
Our reconciliation through a common pain ;
For England's pride to-day, and France's stain,
Lie buried in the last Napoleon's shroud.

¹ The flagship at Spithead which fired the minute-guns on the occasion was *The Duke of Wellington*.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

THE MAY OF 1879

A SPRINGLESS YEAR

WHY lingerest thou, sweet Spring ? This many a day
We've pined at thy delay ;
Where are thy herald swallows ? where the breeze
Should wake these slumbering trees ?
'Twas never yet thy wont to palter thus
And break thy troth with us.

Art thou still dreaming in some sunny cave
Beyond the Southern wave ?
Come ! Flora waits thee, all her petals furled
In the dark underworld ;
O come to her and us ! we miss thy smiles
In these bleak Northern isles :

We miss the music of thy Zephyr wings
Sweeping the Æolian strings
In grove and coppice ; stiff and hoar the grass
Mourns till thy footsteps pass ;
The stubborn ash-buds still are black as death,
Denied thy quickening breath :

The beeches, laden with their last year's dead,
Still rustle crisp and red ;
Nor tasselled willow, nor lush chestnut-bud,
Shows stirring of the blood ;
Nor honey-bees find promise of sweet lime
Or banks of purple thyme.

The brooks are foaming torrents, that should run
Gold-twinkling in the sun ;
The little lambs on the fields' leeward edge
Crouch huddled in the hedge ;
While from a naked elm the mother thrush
Pours her pathetic gush.

Ah, thou art hiding ; thou art not asleep,
For I have seen thee peep
And shudder back before the pitiless storm
Into thy shelter warm ;
Thou art but hiding, fearful to put forth
And brave this boisterous North :

Rude blusterer, he's overleapt the bound
Of his permitted ground ;
Was't not enough to reign the winter long
But he must do thee wrong,
With pinching frosts invading thy retreat
And blasts of arrowy sleet ?

O come at last, sweet Spring, return, return !
 Unwrap this folded fern ;
Come, pity the small building birds whose nests
 Lie open to all guests ;
The unfriendly hedges lend them not a leaf
 To baulk the schoolboy thief.

Wilt thou not come ? April is gone, and May
 Has shivered half away ;
O come, take courage,—the usurper vile
 Dare never face thy smile :
Shall it be written that Midsummer came
 And heard her sister's shame ?

ROYAL OAK DAY

1879

YE merry fays who brew the sap,
Have ye not met with some mishap?
Has cruel Boreas pinched you all to death?
No, sluggards, ye still idly wrap
Yourselves in your snug winter-nap
Among the stones these rugged roots beneath.

Awake, awake! The country-folk,
Defrauded of their yearly joke,
Will sore lament your laziness to-day;
These eyes play false if on this oak
One solitary leaf hath broke;—
Have ye forgot the twenty-ninth of May?

Nestled within your cosy crypt,
All care your selfish minds has slipt
For our rude customs: oakless going hence
Small boys to-day will all be nipt,
And every persecutor whipt;
So both alike will rue your indolence.

O sleepy fays, think what befel
Prince Charles that day at Boscobel !
Had your forefathers so belated been,
Alas for England ! who can tell
But the bare boughs had creaked her knell,
And good Victoria never had been Queen !

ON THE GRAVE OF CHARLES HEWER WRIGHT

IN CROSTHWAITE CHURCHYARD, KESWICK

1878

A STRONG rare personality : a man
Who knew these Cumbrian hills as few have known,
All nooks and windings of their complex plan ;
Had memories stored in well-nigh every stone,
And voices heard which spoke to him alone :
In mind and body both as fit a guide
As ever tracked a path, or climbed a mountain-side.

I see, as first I saw him in my youth ;
Though thrice ten years have flown, still fresh and
warm
The picture lingers of that garb uncouth
Made not for show but use, that wiry form
Hardened by manful toil in sun and storm,
And under shaggy brows that eagle eye
Keen to all sights of earth, all changes of the sky.

GRAVE OF CHARLES H. WRIGHT 41

How oft in weather fair and foul alike

With him we roamed these mountains, stood with him
On the thick-shrouded top of Scawfell Pike,
And heard below the thunder rumbling grim ;
And when out of the tempests' angry rim
The blue fire darted with sharp crackling hiss,
Its livid gleam betrayed black Mickledore's abyss.

'Twas he who taught our inexperienced feet

And swimming heads to dare that mighty wedge,
Sharp, steep-roofed wall of Red Tarn's dark retreat,
Helvellyn's dizziest access—Striding Edge—
And showed us where beneath the treacherous ledge
Gough's faithful dog, couched foodless on the stones,
Three lonely months kept guard by his dead master's
bones.

With him at midnight through the silent street

Of sleeping Keswick we have passed, and seen
The sunrise from old Skiddaw ; heard the bleat
Of the first-wakened sheep, while through the keen
And dewy dawn from upland and ravine
Came chuckling grouse-calls ; and the lake below
Gleamed like a golden plain with palaces of snow.

Then, oh the fairy scene ! when, one by one,

Those fleecy domes uplifted ; and beneath,
Touched by the calm light of the early sun,
Their level bases rich with fern and heath,
Lay Derwent's islands ; and each vaporous wreath
Hung canopied above them, glittering shrouds
That slowly rose, to melt into the opal clouds.

And well, too, I recall a pitchy night
When, with three brothers and that trusty guide,
I crossed Ullswater. All the lake was white,
And wind and wave our labouring oars defied;
Yet scarce we dreamed that danger could betide,
For Wright was at the tiller, and he knew
The shifty tricks and turns of every blast that blew.

What memories thy name to me hath brought,
Friend of my boyhood, friend of those I loved,
Of father and of brothers:—dear the thought
Of every spot where long ago we roved:
By distance now (and two by death) removed,
Still are we linked, through all life's cares and ills,
By each memorial glimpse of these unchanging hills.

Nor may I unrecorded leave the fame
Of thy wide knowledge,—knowledge both of men
And Nature. Thine no literary claim;
What others have discoursed with learned pen
Thou knew'st by heart: all mysteries of the glen
And of the ridgy mountains,—how they came,
How time, and ice, and fire evolved their glorious frame.

If any man knew Cumberland, 'twas thou;
Who else could track her perilous ways obscure,
Or scale the wild crags of her cloudiest brow,
With eye so steady, or with foot so sure?
Or who like thee, we questioned, could endure,
Oft as, dead beaten with the day's fatigue,
We saw thee fresh as who had idly strolled a league.

Who knew these mountains if thou knew'st them
not?

Nor only their stern features : most minute
That insight was. To thee each secret spot
Divulged its treasures :—" Here the Woodsias root
In the damp fissures,"—" Here a single shoot
Of the Germanic Spleenwort once I found :"—
So would thy ready tongue instruct a whole day
round.

Nor less hadst thou of choice companionship
Unusual range ; masters who bore the palm
In every walk of science,¹ from thy lip
Drank in with deference that peculiar charm
Of first-hand observation which no qualm
Of theorising prejudice can fail
To yield to : stubborn facts more than hard words
avail.

Of strange adventure, too, hadst thou vast store ;
And, as we rested in the noontide heat,
Tales would'st thou tell of dreadful Mickledore
Or of the Pillar Rock, or would'st repeat
Some hairbreadth 'scape, when through the blind-
ing sleet,
The fells snowed up, and every mark effaced,
Thy native instinct found a pathway through the
waste.

¹ *e.g.* Lyell, Murchison, Hooker, Sedgwick.

But thou art gone : no more on Kirkfell side,
Or by Will Ritson's ingle, shall we hear
Thy pleasant voice, old friend, unequalled guide,
Or see that face of never failing cheer
To us so humorous, though to some austere,
For toil and storm had ploughed their furrows deep
Like torrent-beds scored out in some rough stony steep.

Ay, thou art gone :—gone whither, He knows best
Who made thee. Strange to us who knew thee here
Comes it e'en now to think of thee at rest
Who never restedst in thy first career
Of earthly duty. Hast thou found some sphere
Of higher service on those lovelier hills
Where Christ Himself is guide,—which God's own
glory fills ?

Peace to thy soul ! with reverence unfeigned
I breathe that heartfelt prayer. Oh, could I hope
That I, a priest of Nature's Lord ordained,
As thou of Nature, in the grander scope
Of this great office might no longer grope
With faltering feet ; but guide, like thee, my flock
Up to the Living Fount, up to the Enduring Rock !

DERWENTWATER

THOU loveliest water (so without rebuke
I hail thee) of a lovely sisterhood,—
From Portinscale to where the brawling brook
Brings down from Scawfell's mountain-multitude
Their daily tax to thy imperial flood,—
Deep in my memory fixt thy every look
Is stored with feeling for the passing mood
Of passion or of rest ; whether each nook
Of the green islands in thy waveless glass
Sparkle inverted ; or swift-changing lights
Chequer thy hills ; or from the purple mouth
Of Borrowdale dark clouds in thickening mass
Roll down to tell us that the gusty South
Holds revelry on Glaramara's heights.

STYHEAD TARN

THE wind is up on Styhead Pass ;
The Tarn, but now a sheet of glass,
Lifts up its myriad heads in fear
Listening as nearer and more near
Sweeps inland up the western vale
The challenge of the coming gale.
Aha, a fight ! in fury blind
They clash together, wave and wind :—
Unequal contest ! from the sea
The wind comes flushed with victory,
Where scarce an hour ago in wrath
He flogged the Atlantic into froth ;
Then woe betide the little lake !
Well may its puny waters quake,
And white with fear in broken rank
Fly pell-mell to the eastern bank.
Now roars the blast in conquering pride,
And, eddying round, from side to side
The waves in wild confusion sweeps
In tumbling surf and shapeless heaps ;
In vain they fret, in vain resist,
He grasps and shakes them into mist,

Or—twisted from the seething flood—
In spiry pillars drives the scud
That shivers into smoky spray,
Or down the Pass is whirled away.
Have pity, heavens, for brake nor barn
Gives shelter by the lonely Tarn ;
And here are human wanderers four,
Tight-knapsacked and storm-beaten sore,
With worse to come, for round yon bluff
Waits entertainment still more rough,—
Above, your fury in their teeth,
The expectant precipice beneath.
Ah, happy he who safe and sound
Holds his mild course on level ground ;
But happier, whose rude strength derides
Storm, and the Gable's shaggy sides ;
Happiest of all, who finds a bed
This blustering night at Wastdale Head !

IN BORROWDALE

Two lazy hours I've lain reclined
A passive pupil of the scene,
Till every line of grey and green
Has left its picture on my mind ;

And well I know that, vague and loose
As were my thoughts these idle hours,
Their rest gave play to subtler powers
And coming days will find their use :

Whatever beauties Nature hath,
Not in the sight is chiefest gain,
But in the memories that remain,
The harvest of the aftermath ;

And hence I know that, as I lay
Those quiet hours devoid of thought,
Into my inner self were wrought
Pure pleasures for some duller day.

WORDSWORTH

WORDSWORTH, with late repentance England owns
The wealth of thy too long neglected mine ;
With purer taste wide sympathies combine
To vindicate thee, whom this age enthrones
Prince among peers whose genius laid the stones
And built the fabric of a worthier shrine
Than Art had reared since Milton's voice divine
Struck her last lofty note. In deeper tones
Didst thou win back the Muse whence far astray
She wandered in dull streets, 'mid brain-spun themes
And musty town-talk, to the light of day,
And sweet fresh Nature with her hills and streams
All vocal with high teaching, and bright dreams
Of things that with this life pass not away.

WORDSWORTH'S GRAVE

IN GRASMERE CHURCHYARD

Nor in the vaulted aisle which holds in trust
England's invisible glory, proud to guard
With lofty epitaph and sculptured bust
Her choicest sons, sage, warrior, statesman, bard—
Not there, where all's conventional, grey, and hard ;
Where comes no freshening sweep of mountain-gust,
And flowers are none, and the hot stones are scarred
By ceaseless trampling o'er the slumbering dust—
Not there !—In more congenial spot he sleeps,
In this loved vale, where sight and sound are rife
With all sweet influences that shaped his life ;
And round him rise the old familiar steeps,
And his own Rotha murmurs all day long
The music that so oft inspired his song.

A VOICE FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOPS

ON dwellers in this mountain-land
How many thoughts arise
Which simplest men may understand
Have they but hearts and eyes.
And one such thought I well believe,
To those who wisdom seek,
Comes morn by morn, and eve by eve,
Down from yon silent peak.

The summits catch the morning fires,
They catch the sunset glow ;
But never to such hue aspires
The workday world below.
So have I seen on Skiddaw's head
Our human life displayed—
The rosy flush of morning spread,
Alas, how soon to fade !

The glory died ; the day crept down
Where sin and sorrow lurk,
The common day of field and town
That lights man to his work ;

But when the working-hours were done
 Another glory came ;
Again went up the crimson sun,
 And lit his beacon-flame.

So to our early life is lent
 Hope's radiance glad and bright ;
Through manhood we must toil, content
 With God's plain useful light.
But unforgotten is the flush,
 And still our hope will yearn
That in the solemn evening's hush
 The glory may return.

THE WILD DOG OF ENNERDALE

THOUGH the mists and the storm seem to revel alone
On the grey sullen rocks of this echoing dale,
 I can fancy each stone
 Has a voice of its own,
Every cliff and ravine its traditional tale.

Fleecy ghosts, if I err not, are thronging the air ;
For here was wrought murder (all records it breaks)
 Which for turmoil and scare
 Will forever compare
With the darkest deeds done in this land of the Lakes.

Let me tell you the tale of the Ennerdale Pest ;
And I haste to premise—it was only a dog,
 Though the old folks invest
 Their mysterious guest
With all terrible shapes, like things seen through the fog.
Some said 'twas a bogey ; some stoutly averred
'Twas a tiger—they knew by his stripes at first glimpse ;
 While others preferred
 A still uglier word,
And declared 'twas the Devil, or one of his imps.

And no wonder they questioned his earthly descent,
For sound he ne'er uttered of bark or of growl ;

Fear nor passion found vent

As he silently went

Flitting ghostly and soft as a night-hunting owl.

But however names differed, in this all agreed—

Dog, bogey, or tiger, or demon, or elf—

That he managed to feed

On the pick of the breed,

Left the carcase, but got the tit-bits for himself.

Night by night two fat sheep were his epicure feast,

Just the jugular blood and a snatch of the steak ;

And his raids were increased

Till the ravenous beast

Was a terror from Kirkfell to Ennerdale Lake.

So the war was declared, and with pitchfork and gun

The whole terrified country was up on the scent ;

And they'd many a run

Long past set of the sun,

But the faster they followed, the faster he went ;

They'd muskets and pistols, they'd swanshot and ball,

They'd collies and lurchers and curs, and what not ?

For the dogs great and small

They impounded them all ;

But he snapped the dogs' legs, and he laughed at the
shot.

All work was at standstill, all shared in the harm,
The cows went unmilked, and the fields were un-
gleaned,

While in shieling and farm
All men talked with alarm
Of the villainous deeds of the Ennerdale Fiend.

From the top of the hills to the flat of the coast
Folks drank his confusion, and dreamt of his feats ;
Like a horrible ghost
Every thought he engrossed
From the foot of the Gable to Cockermouth Streets.

Then, then—when the panic was just at its height,
When fancy had passed all supportable bounds,
When at fall of the night
Women fainted with fright,
And the children all screamed at the tiniest sounds—

O Money, magician for good or for ill,
O omnipotent spell of a liberal purse !
It was thine to instil
Both the pluck and the will,
It was gold that got rid of the Ennerdale curse ;

For there came from Whitehaven this word: Saith
John Russell,

“ Go, scour the country for sturdier hounds,
Dogs of courage and muscle.
Come stir, lads, and bustle ;
Who kills the marauder, I’ll give him ten pounds.”

Ah, where was the dalesman that bait to resist?
By the score, through all weathers—in thunder or fog,
 In moonlight or mist—
 They repaired to the tryst,
Watching early and late for the murderous dog.

Now had I the pen of a Scott I'd set down
(If I happened to know them, and didn't lack space)
 All the men of renown
 From farm, village, and town,
Who came to the front in that wonderful chase :

There were Mossop of Thornholme, and Rothery, and
 Lamb,
Will Jackson of Swinside, and Steel of Birkmoss—
 But here stranded I am,
 For I don't choose to sham,
And true history leaves us here quite at a loss.

Then the scurry, the dodging, the tricks to entrap—
To depict them quite futile the effort would be ;
 Should I try, all the map
 From the ridge of Scarf Gap
Would be scribbled and scored to the Irish Sea.

I could tell of a Sunday—all days were alike—
And the watchers were out on their everyday search,
 When they happened to strike
 On the trail of the tyke,
And the hunt clattered by close to Ennerdale Church.

Now the morning was wet, but the sermon was dry ;
 And in spite of all discipline, penance or birch,
 The whole lot, Low and High,
 Started off in full cry,
 And the parson ¹ himself wasn't left in the lurch.

I could tell of a day when the game was afoot—
 They had found him in Hopehead on Kinniside Fells—
 And they chevied the cute
 And untirable brute
 While the Screes of Wastwater re-echoed their yells :

View Halloo ! He'd doubled. Across Stockdale moor,
 Through Calder and Seascale he led them a rig ;
 Almost down to the shore
 He was still to the fore
 When all traces were lost in the sandhills at Drigg.

But next day came the shout from a northward
 ravine,
 And the Knockmurton shepherds were up on his
 track ;
 In Lamplugh and Dean
 The big scoundrel was seen,
 And he thrice crossed the Marron, and thrice crossed
 it back.

¹ The Rev. Mr. Ponsonby.

Then with cannibal scent, when the light was half spent,
The pack caught the cue from a southerly breeze,
 And ahead they all went
 Over Cleator and Dent,
Round by Egremont down to the sea at St. Bees.

But the end came at last. For at sunrise one morn
In a field he lay sleeping as still as a log,
 Till with hound and with horn
 They invaded the corn—
Then a bound and a rush, and away went the dog.

Through Stockhow and Rowrah he headed the run,
And the wild cheers resounded in Arlecdon mines,
 For the end had begun—
 He had turned—he was done—
And they hemmed him dead beat in the Eskat-wood
 lines.

His last hour was come ; he could only die game,
For lucky Jack Steel was well up with the hounds ;
 And with one steady aim
 Jack achieved deathless fame,
Bagged the Ennerdale monster, and Russell's ten pounds.

But, alas for all greatness ! What fame can escape ?
The local bards sang, and the newspapers puffed ;
 And the world stood agape
 Where the terrible shape
Glared on, with his last grin immortalised—stuffed.

So, forty years after, I saw him adorning
 The sixpenny show of the late Mr. Hutton ;
 There he stood, night and morning,
 A practical warning
 To all lovers of raw illegitimate mutton.

The museum broke up, and the monster broke down ;
 Discarded, moth-eaten, in shame and in squalor,
 From the foot to the crown
 The small boys of the town
 Smashed him up, and the world retains only his collar.

So perish all gourmands ! The moral is brief :—
 Check your appetite ; eat your chops lawfully drest,
 Lest you fall into grief
 For a gluttonous thief,
 And get otherwise stuffed like the Ennerdale Pest.

NOTE.—The historical authority for the above, except the last four stanzas, was a paper published in Dickinson's "Cumbriana." The writer stated that the details of his description were given from his own recollections, supplemented by those of Mr. Steel and others who took part in the hunt. He further stated that the villain of the piece was "a smooth-haired dog of a tawny mouse-colour with dark streaks, apparently a cross between mastiff and greyhound" ; that "his depredations began in May 1810" ; that "in the five months of his Ennerdale campaign he destroyed nearly 300 sheep and lambs" ; and that "his dead carcase weighed 8 imperial stones."

The said carcase, very much the worse for wear, but quite bearing out the truth of this description, still occupied a prominent place in Hutton's Museum at Keswick in 1848, but how much longer I do not know.—F. A.

ON THE NAMES OF TWO CUMBERLAND MOUNTAINS

I

“ROBINSON”

ONE OF THE NEWLANDS RANGE

HAST thou a poet's mind, an artist's eye?
Take thou advice, and walk these Cumbrian dales
Unquestioning; and when thy knowledge fails
Let thine imaginative soul supply
Names to the mountains. Ask no further why.
This only will I tell thee: there prevails
A nomenclature here which dead as nails
Would make thee faint at every new reply.
See'st thou yon glorious mass, steep-scarped and wild,
A thing of grandeur to be limned or sung?
Go—sing, paint, climb it! but restrain thy tongue
From asking of the vulgar how 'tis styled,
Lest from thy swooning soul the cry be wrung,
“No! this is bathos pure and undefiled.”

II

“HIGH STREET”

HE earned high rank among the Malaprops
Whose fancy coined this unmelodious name
(The mountain's insult, and its author's shame),
Redolent of smoke and haberdashers' shops,
And roaring traffic, and slow-lounging fops :—
Thou rugged monster, o'er whose mighty frame
I've toiled to-day, and seen go down in flame
The sun behind a hundred mountain-tops—
Had he who dubbed thee seen, as I have seen,
Bleawater, and that perpendicular mass
That frowns above it ; or the Nan Bield Pass ;
Or Thornthwaite Crag ? No, he was dropt, I ween,
Out of the skies on thy long summit, green
With levels of interminable grass.

GAELIC NAMES

STRONACHLACHAR ! Ballachulish !

There's a cracker for your jaws !
Were there ever names more foolish,
Less conformable to laws ?
To pronounce them quite outstrips
All the art of Southron lips.

Minds distraught might question whether
Bloody-minded Celtic chiefs
Put these awful words together
To enhance their clansmen's griefs—
Made them say, for certain crimes,
"Stronachlachar" fifty times.

Till the thumbscrew was invented
What worse torture could be found ?
Sure the hardiest wretch repented
Ere the fiftieth time came round,
And to virtue kept more close
Rather than repeat the dose.

We who read them at a distance
One by one the letters scan ;
Spell them, not without assistance ;
Speak them seldom as we can :
Fifty times ! The dearest vice
Were too dear at such a price.

TO THE YEW-TREE

IN DARLEY DALE CHURCHYARD, DERBYSHIRE

Old yew, what thought can measure back thy years,
Or guess whose hand within these sacred bounds
Planted and consecrated thee with tears
Where slept his dead beneath their new-made
mounds?

What generations of poor mortal man
Since then have lain within thine eyeless gaze;
Who furthest had outstretched life's common span¹
A very babe to thine unnumbered days!

Thou king of yews! yea, who disputes thy crown?
For though there be of more stupendous girth
Their walls are ruined; none of like renown
With bole unmaimed survives in British earth:

While dynasties have risen and decayed
Here in God's Acre thou hast silent stood
Careless of time, by tempests undismayed,
A tower impregnable of living wood.

¹ One tombstone records a death at the age of 102, and the Burial Register has another at 106.

Majestic tree ! alas, to vulgar minds
How unsuggestive of the ages flown !
They come, and wonder, and pass by ; nor finds
One thought a place but of thy bulk alone ;

Nor lingers in the annals of the Dale,
Or in our people's legendary lore,
Trustworthy hint whereon to build the tale,
By safe conjecture, of those days of yore.

Yet may the imaginative mind create
What various fortunes marked thine age-long growth :
What meetings, partings, grief, and love, and hate,
What secret crimes, what pangs of sundered troth.

Beneath the welcome covert of thy boughs
A thousand years of village life have passed ;
Here childhood sported, youth made lovers' vows,
Old age found rest, and all a grave at last.

Sir John of Darley¹ knew thee ; in thy shade
The Norman masons wrought their moulded stones ;
Here turned to dust gay foresters are laid ;
Thy roots have wandered among Saxon bones.²

¹ The knight whose effigy lies beneath the S. transept window and who held the royal manor of Darley under Edward II.

² Darley had a priest and a church when the Domesday Survey was made in 1081-86 ; a Saxon stone is built into the external wall between the porch and the tower, and a fragment of a large cross like those at Bakwell and Eyam was found when the church was restored in 1853 ; it is figured in vol. 8 of the *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal*, and is now in the Weston Park Museum at Sheffield.

Thy stubborn wood through many a Pagan shield
Drove its resistless passage ; thou perchance
Didst arm the archers who on Crecy field
Rained havoc on the chivalry of France.

Fair Agnes Rollesley ¹ with thy leaves of gloom
Wreathed her lord's bier ; thou heard'st the last
farewell
Oft as men bore to his ancestral tomb
Some Milward, Wendesley, or Collumbell.

And through thy darkness moaned the heated air
When Death held carnival,² and one by one
Who to the pit their hideous burden bare
Themselves were borne ere sank another sun :

Ah then, what sounds unwonted,—sudden vow,
Mad laughter, blasphemous despairing cry,
Vague prayer from lips that never prayed till now,
Went up discordant to the lurid sky !

Full oft white-glistening choir and vested priest,
With cross uplifted and low-chanted psalm,
Wending their churchward way in fast or feast
Felt the dumb influence of thy changeless calm.

¹ Whose elegant figure is portrayed on an altar-slab in the N. transept. There are monuments in the church to all the families mentioned in the last line of the same stanza : Sir Thomas Wendesley, who fell in the battle of Shrewsbury (1403), appears to have been buried at Bakewell, where his effigy in full plate armour is to be seen in the Vernon Chapel.

² The "sweating sickenes" of 1551, followed by the plague of 1557-58, recorded in the Burial Register.

Nor less, when beauty was divorced from awe,
And factious zeal had humbled Church and Throne,
In thy stern aspect the grim Roundhead saw
The black and joyless image of his own.

That sullen frenzy passed :—both Church and State
Emerged triumphant from the civil strife ;
And loyal minds once more could contemplate
In thee our monarchy's perennial life :

And anglers loitering late by Derwent's side
Heard Darley bells ring in the happier times ;
And up from Matlock, as the cadence died,
And down from Winster came responsive chimes :

Right gladly rang they, for that day unmatched
Restored our king, and healed the nation's sores ;
And dim with joy was many an eye that watched
Its last light die behind the Stanton moors.

And change on change has followed ; age on age,
Each filled with circumstance, rolls slowly by ;
And ending here their shortlived pilgrimage
The dalesfolk in their nameless myriads lie.

Weak minds there are whose superstitious fear
Peoples thy gloom with ghostly shapes of dread,
Weird visitants from some malignant sphere,
Or restless spirits of the untimely dead :

Or morbid fancy sees at peep of morn

Round thy huge trunk the fairies break their dance :—
More solid truth be mine ! Thou hast outworn
A hundred decades of the world's advance.¹

To me thy patriarchal form brings thought

Of centuries linked in one historic bond ;
Of men who lived and sorrowed, joyed and wrought,
And still are living in some life beyond.

How fit thy place hard by this ancient pile

Where the One Faith through every chance and change
Has held her lamp unquenched, though dimmed awhile,
Far as the Christian thought can backward range :—

Has held, and shall hold ; for what powers of ill

Can thwart the Eternal ? Whatsoe'er betide,
God's holy Ark, bearing her Pilot still,
Shall the fell fury of all storms outride.

Even so, old tree, thou standest sound and firm,

Clothed in new green with each returning Spring ;
Nor dare imagination fix the term
When British yews shall own another king :

¹ The age of the tree is purely a matter of speculation : the "2000 years" credited to it in the local guidebooks represent the estimate of Mr. J. R. Jackson of the Kew Gardens. I have adopted a more modest (probably too modest) figure. Parts of a Roman villa were unearthed some sixty years ago a few yards west of the yewtree.

Nay, rather, in her dreams she sees thee last
A life unquenched, defiant of decay,
Till o'er thy head peals out the final blast
And every shattered grave gives up its prey.

A SUPPLEMENT TO WORDSWORTH'S
"LEGEND OF OKER HILL IN
DARLEY DALE"

SPIRIT of Wordsworth, pardon, if demands
Of later knowledge tempt my rustic skill
To tell the sequel. Still beneath the Hill,
Hedged by grey-lichened walls, their birthplace ¹ stands
Who set those sycamores, clasped trembling hands
And parted, each to work his several will
As Fortune might adjudge for good or ill,
And took their devious ways to distant lands.
Then Fortune smiled on one, on one she frowned :
And lo, the years her whimsical decree
Have doubly sealed : for while this brother found
Wealth and success, to that were both denied ;
And by some subtle law of sympathy
One lone tree lives, its fellow pined and died.

¹ Snitterton Hall.

MOCKBEGGAR CASTLE

IN THE CRATCLIFFE ROCKS, DERBYSHIRE

ABOVE the wooded steeps of Birchover
Rises a mighty pile of gritstone rocks
Shaped by Time's teeth, or Earth's convulsive shocks,
Or freak of ghostly-skilled artificer,
To rude rectangular forms that cheat the eye
With semblance of a mansion. Thither, in quest
Of alms or food, have hungry wanderers pressed
As the false chimneys towered against the sky ;
But coming, only found a hermitage,
And on its lowly front—His arms stretched wide—
An old-world carving of The Crucified.
No food was there, nor alms ; yet who may gauge
The thoughts that on their weary hearts were shed
Of Him who had not where to lay His head ?

DEPEDALE WOOD, DERBYSHIRE

IN SPRING AND SUMMER

I

FLOWERLESS? nay, unmerited the taunt ;
You come too late. True, in this lovely dell
Few Summer-plants their gaudy liveries flaunt :
Come in fresh Spring, here all her favourites dwell ;
The hyacinth hangs here her purple bell,
And rarer blooms make this their special haunt—
Pale toothwort and the green-flowered moschatel.
Neither of delicate fragrance is there want
Nor tenderest grace ; under the budding trees
Blue violets nestle, and dispute the air
With banks of primrose ; here are orchises
And vetchlings, and on many a dripping ledge
Gold saxifrage ; and, mixed with oxlips rare,
Anemones gem all the meadow's edge.

II

You ask too much of Nature. In her chime
Is no unmeaning note, she cannot err ;
Vainly and foolishly you seek in her,
When Summer's here, the gladness of her prime.

Her life, like ours, has its permitted time
Of laughter when the sap begins to stir :
Grave cares o'ertake us, and then seldomer
We seek the frolic and the pantomime.
Call you this failure? mark this pendulous thing
That hides among the violet's darkened leaves ;
'Twas once a joyous blossom, and contains
What will be blossoms in another Spring,
Ripening, till then, through many steamy eves
And morning suns, its inconspicuous grains.

FLOOD ON THE TRENT

LONG EATON, 1875

'Twas the 19th of October. Our church-bells were
newly hung
(So in memory the date securely dwells),
And the men were ready at the ropes for the first peal
to be rung,
For the priest had come to dedicate the bells.

Then the rain began in earnest. But the priest got
through his work ;
And the bells rang out their warning in the air
That, henceforward, if the people their devotions
meant to shirk,
They should not forget the Parish Church was there.

But the rain, it seemed, had come to stay ; and through
the livelong night
It continued pouring pitilessly down,
Till the roads were like a mill-race, and by dawn of
morning light
It had captured half the doorsteps in the town.

And from dawn to dusk a second day, with growing
force and sound,
And from dusk to dawn it fell in solid sheets ;
It was bursting through the drain-pipes, it was tearing
up the ground,
Digging holes at all the corners of the streets.

'Twas a night to be remembered, not a time to go to
bed ;
Men were watching full of restlessness and fear,
For the angry sky was roaring, loud and moonless,
overhead,
And the river sounding nearer and more near.

Now the river's voice was ominous, for none the fact
could blink
That it ought not to be audible at all,
Since the houses lay a measured mile above the nearest
brink,
And the railway ran between them like a wall.

But again the sullen morning broke, and the mystery
was cleared :
As far as the astonished eye could strain
All bounds had vanished utterly, and the Thrumpton
woods appeared
Like an island in the wide and stormy main ;

For the Charnwood Forest rainfall had come racing
down the Soar,
And the Derwent brought the soakings from the peat
With Wye's white waters mingled, rushing streamlets
by the score,
And Trent's vast volume made the tale complete ;

And, to crown the wild confusion, the great ballast-
holes were brimmed
By the bursting of the Erewash Canal :—
Such a deluge drowned the country as few fancies
could have limned,
Fewer eyes had ever seen, or ever shall.

Then, as evening neared, the sobbing skies dried up
their baleful flow,
And there struggled out a late and lurid sun ;
And the blushing clouds lit up the watery wilderness
below
As ashamed of all the mischief they had done.

But their penitence availed us not ; the night was full
of scares,
While a rolling sea, tumultuous and brown,
Was washing through the windows, and climbing up
the stairs,
Of our cruelly invaded little town.

So, when the dreary dawn crept up, we launched our
little boat

On a mission through the swamped and tossing
streets;

And lo, the place was captured: all the furniture afloat
Disporting in rude acrobatic feats;

And while, pigs and poultry greeted us from bedrooms
overhead,

Human fingers from amidst the seething mess
Stretched out, and lowered baskets to receive our dole
of bread:—

Oh, the bakers had to sweat that day, I guess.

And, steering over farm-yard gates in the destroyer's
track,

We heard of missing cows and smothered sheep;
And saw the Summer's harvest lost, where many a new-
built stack

Stood soaking in the flood a fathom deep.

And on and on our boat careered through hedgetops
almost hid;

And, where the trains two days before had run,
Were sleepers pointing skywards the twisted rails amid,
As though a second Chaos had begun.

Surely, the clouds have consciences ; for evidence we
found

Of their deep though ineffectual remorse,
In the countless pools of muddy tears that still be-
slimed the ground

When the following year had finished half its course.

Well ! life is short, and words are nought ; so here I'll
dry my pen,

But we shan't forget the lively days we spent ;
Nor shall we greatly envy those who see the like again
Of those rollicking vagaries of the Trent.

ON THE CORNISH COAST

IN memory's inmost niche be ye installed,
Ye Cornish cliffs, and these rich-jewelled seas
Now sapphire pure, now glancing emerald
And amethyst, as wills the passing breeze ;
These caverned heights and fern-clad crevices,
These gleaming rocks gold-mantled, purple-palled,¹
And these jagg'd reefs whereon the fortresses
Uprose, that once the Atlantic surge outwalled.
Nor less the grandeur of these iron coasts
When wintry waves before the tempest bounding
Rave round the headlands with unearthly screech,
And climb the bulwark-steeps, far inland sounding
Like the artillery of Titanic hosts,
And with sad wreckage strew the mangled beach.

¹ *i.e.* clothed, as so frequently, with bright yellow lichen and myriads of mussels.

TRURO CATHEDRAL

WHERE are the courage and the loving pains
Which, in the ages that before us went,
In massive grandeur and rich ornament
Bequeathed to England all her gorgeous fanes ?
Can we but re-embellish their remains ?
Is penury grown more ? religion spent ?
Zeal dead ? Or is our punier Art content
To patch and piece the work of subtler brains ?—
Truro accepts the challenge :—See ! upsprings
A new Cathedral, a right noble pile
Instinct with the old devotion of past days
When England's Church was one, and through the isle
Rose one straight incense-cloud of prayer and praise
Into the presence of the King of kings.

A CALM SUNSET AT NEWQUAY, CORNWALL

THE tender hues of evening fade,
And every eastward-facing cliff
Writes, as in mighty hieroglyph,
Along the sand its lengthening shade.

The busy sounds of day have died ;
'Tis silence all on land and sea,
Save in the wind's soft melody
That freshens with the rising tide ;

And, on the hills fast darkening,
Against the sun's half-drownèd disk
Their feathery fringe of tamarisk
Grows dusky as Apollyon's wing.

Now vanished is the last red flush
That lingered in the western sky ;
Both wind and wave still gentlier sigh,
And join the universal hush.

The day is gone ; and on the night
The myriad lamps of heaven emerge,
And on the coast's extremest verge
The triple flash of Trevose Light.

THE MONUMENTS ON PLYMOUTH HOE

"Afflavit Deus, et dissipantur."

I

So looked he, gazing seaward from the Hoe,
The calm strong man, that fateful summer day,
And lightly poised his bowl, nor ceased to play:—
"Ay, ay, they come," he said, "but they shall go":—
Then made full leisurely the winning throw,
And turned and went. That night from Plymouth Bay,
A motley fleet, they sailed where tossing lay,
Darkening the ocean two good leagues, the foe.
Then fought Drake's heroes; and the attendant hosts
Of God's winds battled for them, scattering
And battering the huge high-castled ships.
So valiant faith, like David's stone and sling,
Drove back the invading terror from our coasts,
And did the glory of proud Spain eclipse.

II

Shame on the dull utilitarian mind
That can pass by this spot and feel no thrill
Of martial warmth, no bracing of the will
Bravely to act its humbler part assigned!

O England, 'tis such memories that bind
Thy sons in one strong brotherhood, and fill
Their souls with pride that thou art England still,
The same world-force as in the years behind.
Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher, and ye who served
Unknown, unnamed, in Effingham's campaigns,
Long as our flag floats out on every breeze
Our sailors' hearts 'twill nerve, as it has nerved,
To know that English blood throbbed in your veins,
And England's navy still shall rule the seas.

III

But learn, my vaunting muse, a truer strain :—
“ Non nobis, Domine ! ” By land and sea
Prevail our arms ? “ Non nobis, Domine ! ”
Be this our triumph's reverent refrain !
For by Thy will, O God, kings fall or reign,
Yea, all is Thine, and all things come of Thee :
“ Thine is the glory and the victory : ”
Thy sword, Thy tempests, humbled haughty Spain.
Lay it, my country, to thy inmost heart :—
Whatever blazonry enrich thy flag,
Befits thee not the voice of boast and brag ;
God is thy strength, and what He wills thou art.
“ Non nobis Domine ! ” thy motto be
Now and for aye :—“ Non nobis, Domine ! ”

SNOWDON

SNOWDON, capricious monster, I have seen
Thy splendour and thine awfulness ; on whom
Now fleet a thousand tints of gold and green,
Now growl dull thunders through thy purple gloom ;
And I have seen the sinking sun illumine
Thy mighty bulk with more than earthly sheen
Till all seemed fused together, crag and combe,
One level wall of roseate light serene :
So once I viewed thee, climbing towards Craig Dwr,
And from a northward-facing eminence
Saw, o'er thy summit poised in pale blue air,
Motionless clouds of vivid carmine pure ;
And marvelled whether past the veil of sense
Was anything more exquisitely fair.

THE WATER LOBELIA

Lobelia Dortmanna

IN tarn and lake
Their home they make,
These lonely little creatures ;
All round the edge
Among the sedge
You see their pallid features :
Let us beseech
Their silent speech,
And take them for our teachers.

Nowhere on earth
Have they their birth,
But in the shallow flood ;
There born and bred,
By instinct led
They come up here to bud,
Leaving below,
As not for show,
Their plain leaves in the mud.

Now mark the stem :
In all of them
Its growth is not alike ;
The one that shoots
From deepest roots
Sends up the longest spike ;
But these and those,
As each one grows,
Up to the surface strike.

Now, have we not
A lesson got
In this most humble school ?
The plant can show
Some truth, although
Its pulpit's but a pool :
It merely lives ;
Yet, living, gives
This wise, though homely, rule :—

“ Out of the slime
We try to climb
Up to the light of day ;
And do, because
Our nature's laws
Command, and we obey : ”—
Lay we to heart
Their simple art,
And try to do as they.

There's various chance
And circumstance
For every soul alive ;
But unto some
They easier come,
While some need more to strive ;
Yet even these,
If so they please,
May like those others thrive ;

For nature's dole
To every soul
By Wisdom is decreed :
We, like the flowers,
Have each the powers
Best suited to our need ;
And used aright
Up to the light
Our lives they'll surely lead.

ENTERPRISE

SUCCESS is sweet ; bear witness, who have quaffed
The intoxicating draught ;
And sweet is honey ; but the little things
That make it, carry stings ;
Then shall the bees have lost their patient labour's cost
Because to win their fruit some danger brings ?

Bees hurt not honey-gatherers, because
They veil themselves in gauze :—
Themselves, ay, that's the point ; with hands and eyes
Concealed, they can despise
All perils, and contrive to rob the buzzing hive ;
They've done their duty, and they've won their prize.

Let Duty be our aim ; Success may wait
To follow, soon or late ;
But let not Self obtrude, put Duty first ;
The soul in Self immersed
May gain some poor success, but such as none can
bless,
Nor can it slake our nature's lawful thirst.

Then think on Duty, and let be Success !

She'll crown thee none the less

If thou fight bravely with the adverse things

That daily Duty brings.

Who shrinks because there lurk some dangers in his
work

Is daily forging his own conscience-stings.

The lazy man, says Solomon the wise,

Declines all enterprise ;

And, hugging close his plea that none can tell

What risks in work may dwell,

Sits moping lest he meet a lion in the street,

So loses life in saving it too well.

SUSPENSE

GRIEF, terror, ignorance, darkness intense,
Vague apprehensions built on things allied
By slenderest links or none, perverted sense
That sees portentous hints on every side,
And dreary mazes with no clew to guide,
And heartsick tremors sprung we know not whence,
Suspensions false or tenfold magnified :
These be thy ghastly tokens, black Suspense !
Fell parent thou of feverish dreams of ill
And baseless phantom-cares and hideous fright,
And cruel anguished thoughts that come and go,
Veiled messengers from some dim world of woe,
Curdling the watcher's blood with sudden chill
Like muffled footsteps heard at dead of night.

SYMPATHY

SUGGESTED ON FRIAR'S POINT, KESWICK

WE'RE made for mutual help, not selfish ease,
That on his neighbour's need each life may build
An altar of self-sacrifice ; be thrilled
By sorrows not his own ; each hand may seize
His brother's load and bear it ; joys may please
Wherewith another's heart, not ours, is filled.
Thus mutually minded, there's instilled
A common strength and stay. Look on these trees,
Two ancient alders, from the craggy shelf
Seeming to hang so loose ; whose roots, laid bare
By the invading lake, in many a fold
And knot so closely interwoven are
That each, in ministering a firmer hold
To its weak fellow, is held up itself.

SORROW IN HIGH PLACES

December 14, 1861, 1871, 1878.

O DAY for England's Queen thrice-dyed in gloom !
What has she wronged thee, that the cruel years
But bring thee back to broach fresh founts of tears
And teem new sorrows from thy baleful womb ?
Thy name is graven on her husband's tomb ;
Thy name recalls a heartsick nation's fears
When Death stood ready with half-opened shears
Threatening her son, her heir, in manhood's bloom.
Oh, was it not enough ? What ! wilt thou crave
Monopoly of grief, that yet again
That name hath writ itself, with iron pen
And widow's tears, upon her daughter's grave ?
Remorseless day ! such pressure needed not
To accent the lesson of man's common lot.

SANDRINGHAM

January 14, 1893

“ Our times are in His hand, who saith, ‘ A whole I planned.’ ”
—BROWNING.

AH, stop the pageant ! Hush,—make room for Death !
Muffle the marriage-bells, and take away
These orange-blossoms bright ! No, let them stay
With cypress twined, a bridal-funeral wreath.
How little guess we mortals here beneath
Life’s purpose,—Patience ! we shall learn one day
Why this joy blossomed, that must still delay ;
Why one might give his best, one but bequeath
A hope half-fashioned. When each separate strand
Of Love’s cord is unwrap ; and childhood, youth,
And age seem one,—we shall cry “ Wisely planned ! ”
See all the tangle of these changeeful years
Knit in one gracious reconciling Truth,
And reap glad harvests sown in blinding tears.

GOOD-BYE

'Tis but a term of happy schoolboy life
For which they part, some twelve swift-rolling weeks ;
Yet are there sighs that tell of inward strife,
And tears are stealing down the mother's cheeks ;
" Good-bye, good-bye," with trembling lip she speaks,
And stoops to kiss her boy's fair upturned brow,
Who, smiling, with forced courage vainly seeks
To hide the pang young pride must not allow.
Mock not, cold cynic, the involuntary burst
Of what you count a disproportioned grief !
Each separation, be it ne'er so brief,
Is Death's prophetic image, oft rehearsed
Ere that last parting when the veil is drawn
Betwixt us till the Resurrection-dawn.

FILEY BAY

THE full moon in her soft and fleecy bed
Is almost motionless, and clear as day
Gleam the tall cliffs that southwards hem the Bay ;
In front the slumbering ocean lies outspread ;
Northwards, the treacherous Brigg, the sailor's dread,
Juts out, a low black line ; and far away
The lighthouse lamps their friendly beams display
In fitful brilliance flashed from Flambro' Head.
Now wake, imagination, wake and call
From his loud caves the fierce north-eastern gale ;
Brew such a storm as turned all Filey pale
When helpless-staggering, hurled before the squall,
The *Danemand*, scattering mast, and man, and bale,
Was dashed on Speeton's white terrific wall.

THE LIGHTHOUSE

YE kindly lamps, that o'er the darkening main
Pour faultlessly your wealth of piercing light,
May ye upon this perilous rock maintain
Your faithful warning ! But a single night
Should chance or negligence your ray eclipse,—
Should lightning, or some dire convulsion, check
Your measured revolutions, oh, what ships
Roving this lonely waste were doomed to wreck !
Shine on, ye guardian angels of the sea,
And may the flash of your unslumbering eyes,
While through a thousand storms it safely guides
The ocean-wanderers, win and make them wise
To trust the invisible Friend Whose care presides
O'er all the ways of all the souls that be.

CHICKWEED IN NOVEMBER

BRAVE little flower, I saw thee in the Spring
Ere one but thou had dared to show its head ;
And thou art here, the one undaunted thing
When all that later bloomed have long been dead.
With no gay tints doth partial Nature spread
Thy unpretentious petals ; thither bring
No fays their subtle essences to shed
Rich perfume on the dewy morning's wing :
Yet is there that in thy pale scentless star
May win our homage :—earliest herald thou
Of the year's life, its sole survivor now
Where fragrance and bright hues no longer are.
So might I be for every worthy work,
The first to attempt it, and the last to shirk !

PRETENTIOUS EDUCATION

As broken arcs to the completed round,
As summer apples to autumnal fruit,
Or single parts to the full choral sound ;
How aptly these similitudes might suit
Our modern schooling ! Hosts of things begun,
Half taught, less learnt, then left in middle air
'Twixt earth and sky, like cobwebs quickly spun
And quickly shattered ; gone we know not where
When the time comes to use them. Sciences
The learner can't apply ; some foreign tongue
Spelt and pronounced, not spoken. Shams like these,
What profit's in them all ?—vain smatterings,
And food for vanity ! Best were they flung
Into the dusthole of discarded things.

TIMELY SPEECH

WHY fail true words so often of the good
We trust them with? Alas, too soon—too late—
We give our message ; now procrastinate,
Now haste unwisely, careless of his mood
We would befriend,—the proud or passionate blood
That will resent, the dull lethargic state
That will ignore our warning ; or we wait
Till faults have stiffened into hardihood.
Nature and Art both teach a better way ;
Nature does nought untimely : sloth nor haste
Is in her works ; nor in true Art delay
Shows ever, or precipitance misplaced :
There is one moment when the smith must strike ;
Too quick—too tardy—the blow fails alike.

THE PARSON'S LIFE IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

METHINKS it is a question idly asked
“Whether in town or country life be best?”
Both have I known, have been familiar guest
At both their banquets, both their ills unmasked ;
In country suns unclouded I have basked,
And toiled in streets by noisome smoke opprest ;
In both found joys to give due labour zest,
Both here and there known strength and temper
tasked.
Are not, in both, the same books on our shelves ;
The same material,—man—wherewith to deal ;
The same help, if we'll ask it, from above ;
To our free wills, in both, the same appeal ?
Sum up then: the criterion's in ourselves ;
To sloth were either dull, both bright to love.

NEW LIGHTS

THEIR name is Legion who with voice and pen
Make noisy onslaught on our hallowed Creeds,
A sore bewilderment to simple men
Whose faith, once fixt, lives most in Christian deeds :
But whoso with due knowledge hears and reads
Strips piecemeal their pretentious garb ; and then
Finds them old ghosts tricked out in brand-new weeds,
Laid long ago, and to be laid again.
So may you see, in some lone Scottish glen,
Gigantic forms loom through the mountain-fog,
And shiver as the portent big with fears
Draws nearer—But your eagle proves a wren
When, face to face encountering you, appears
A weather-beaten shepherd with his dog.

THE AGNOSTICS

HEARKEN, O people, we are they that know !
Take, then, the verdict unto which we come :—
Knowledge is Sense ; and into sight hath swum
No God, no Heaven, no Soul. What can ye show
When all is sifted ? Look above, below,—
You catch no glimpse ; you pray, and all is dumb :
Know, then, that you know nothing ; sight's the sum
Of human knowledge :—let religion go !—
Nay rather let come back the glimmering days
Ere men knew that they knew ; when simple awe,
In dark self-questionings and every phase
Of Nature's life, an Unseen Presence saw ;
And gave, obedient to the inward law,
Due sacrifice of voiceless prayer and praise.

THE ANTI-DOGMATIST

“ His school of thought ? ” Well, he was nothing quite,
Yet stole some unacknowledged scraps from each ;
His mind eclectic saw all sides of right
(Such was his boast) ; and each by turns he'd preach ;
And if one cavilled at his motley speech,
He would wax wroth and cry—“ You troglodyte,
You mope in your own den, and never reach
Beyond its narrow walls one glimpse of light ;
I scorn your Schools ! Each maps its puny plot,
And stakes it round, and digs its snug retreat
Just large enough for Truth and its own soul :
Fools all,—I care not who ye are, or what,—
To think that she lives in some special hole,
Or that one eye can see her form complete ! ”

THE WORKHOUSE CASUALS

I LINGERED to watch by the side of the road
Where the Union Workhouse stands,
As the vagrants streamed from their nightly abode
And slowly, wearily, sullenly strode
To their loafing in purposeless bands.

Good God ! what piteous faces were there,
Lank, and haggard, and wan,
Bloated with drink, or furrowed by care ;
Bodies degraded, filthy, half-bare,
Manhood all withered and gone.

I looked on the wretches so wasted and wild,
And the thought came, laden with tears,
Of the day when each was an unsullied child,
And a father, it might be, had blessed him, and
smiled
With fond hope for the untrodden years.

O Sin, thou black shadow that brood'st over all,
Destroyer of innocent mirth,
Turning the sweetest honey to gall,
And spreading thy curséd funeral pall
O'er the fairest promise of earth !

That bright little baby, we look on it now
 A monster of fear and disgust,
And who has worked this ruin but thou,
Dashing the garland of joy from its brow
 And treading it down in the dust?

The forehead is seamed with hatred and spite
 That once shone open and clear ;
The heart is stricken and eaten with blight,
And the eyes that once twinkled with boyish delight
 Are fixt in a devilish leer ;

And friendship once pressed the hard hand that now
 grips
 No hand that's not lined with a purse ;
Ay, the purest of lights has the darkest eclipse,—
A mother once kissed those blasphemous lips
 That scarce open now but to curse.

The passions that burn, the suspicions that freeze,
 And selfishness, sloth, and strife,
There's none but thou breeds demons like these :
From thee grow poverty, shame, and disease,
 And the cares that darken the life.

Ay, there's never an age, and never a land
 But thy footsteps in tears we trace ;
God's fairest creations are sealed with the brand
Of thy pestilent breath and thy withering hand,
 Thou damning woe of our race !

And that fatherly blessing, that motherly kiss,
 Dare we hope even these have been known?
 In what thousands of homes has the old Serpent's hiss
 Been the one inspiration of death! and from this
 Boy and man have but normally grown:

Poor souls, in empoisoned heredity nursed,
 Shall their faults with our own be compared?
 Let us fear lest our places and theirs be reversed
 When the first shall be last, and the last shall be first,
 And the Great Account righteously squared!

O Christ, Who the whole world's sorrows hast borne,
 May we learn Thy compassion Divine,
 To feel for our brothers whose flesh Thou hast worn,
 Nor suffer that we with the Pharisee's scorn
 Should spurn these lost ones of Thine!

Let us think of the Magdalen's purified heart,
 Of the Publican's golden chains burst,—
 And believe, since the same mighty Saviour Thou art,
 And Thy Spirit can still the same mercy impart,
 While there's life there is hope for the worst.

THE SCIENCE OF THE UNSCIENTIFIC

“The assumption with which all the churches and sects set out, that there is a great Personal First Cause, the moral and intelligent Governor of the Universe . . . can never be verified.”
—MATT. ARNOLD, *Lit. and Dogma*, Pref.

“To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.”
—WORDSWORTH.

You ask—“Is there a God above,
And can we His existence prove ;
What reason has our faith to give ?”
This, all sufficient—*that we live*.
Life! What is life? We know the trend
Of speculations that pretend
This age-long question to have solved
In living creatures self-evolved :
The newfledged scientific talk
Of life in the decaying stalk,
How germs of being daily creep
Spontaneous from the rotting heap.
Suppose (though Tyndall stands aloof,
And says that *he* can find no proof)—

But if they did, how would it touch
 The final truth?—'twould tell this much,
 That God has other ways than those
 We've been accustomed to suppose.
 Or what if it be true that Man
 Descends from an ascidian?
 What if his father was an ape?
 We cannot in this way escape
 The initial question, "What is Life?"
 On this one point turns all the strife:—
 Can life create itself?—The chasm
 You've bridged from self to protoplasm;
 What have you gained? the point you miss
 So long as you're content with this:
 Go back and back for any distance,
 How do you touch the *first* existence?
 Your jellybag grew up to ape,
 Who reached at last to human shape:—
 Granted! Then tell us, if you can,
 Who made the first ascidian?
 But come, here is a simpler task,
 Answer yourself the thing you ask:—
 Go gather the first flower you find
 And tell us, was it Chance or Mind
 That fashioned it in every part
 With such incomparable art,
 A world of exquisite design
 Where use and loveliness combine
 To make it all 'twas meant to be
 In the great world's economy?

Who made it such, and only such,
With all it needs, nor aught too much?
Let others hold, who love debate,
This thing developed by blind fate,
Or smile contempt on those who claim
To speak of "Him" from Whom it came;—
To me it must exhibit still
The impress of a Living Will,
Of an intelligent First Cause
Whose mind determines Nature's Laws.
It tells me of Almighty Power:
I reckon that Who made this flower
Could make or mar, if so He please,
A million worlds with equal ease.
To me, unlearned though I be,
His love's inscribed on all I see.
Nor, saying this, do I forget
The numerous sights which seem to let
The thought of pure beneficence
(Nay, show like counter-evidence),—
The sufferings that go hand in hand
With what appears so kindly planned:
Pain, sorrow, loss,—a thousand things
From which the dark suspicion springs
That boundless Love cannot consist
With boundless Power. "If both exist,
The world," men say, "should surely be
Another thing than what we see."
But what if man have wrought to curse
This province of God's Universe?

Nothing from His pure love detract
 The fruits of man's own wilful act ;
 All ills we see are centred in
 The unfathomed mystery of Sin.
 This argument can never move
 Our hearts to doubt the Maker's Love :—
 Nay, rather, when in grief and pain
 We find remedial means to gain
 Conquest o'er sin, or power to wean
 From earth and fix on things unseen
 Our hearts and hopes, they even prove
 At once His Wisdom and His Love,
 Who makes the very fruits of ill
 The handmaids of His loving will.
 For me His perfect wisdom lurks
 Under the least of Nature's works :—
 (The least ? nay, what is more or less
 Where all one truth alike express ?)
 There is no thing so vast or weak
 But there His voiceless accents speak :
 'Tis He who paints the butterfly
 And rolls the tempests through the sky ;
 Whose will controls the raging sea
 And lends its instinct to the bee ;
 Whose fingers weave the lily's robe
 And steer through space this wandering globe.
 With Him is neither great nor small,
 In all He lives and speaks through all :
 In rock and tree, in beast and bird,
 His teachings are by wisdom heard ;

When kingdoms reel, or infants cry,
The wakeful heart may feel Him nigh ;
When fledgelings rustle in the thatch
The listening ear His voice may catch
Without whose *fat* just and wise
No hero lives, no sparrow dies.
From the Archangel next His throne
To the grey lichen on the stone
All things existent, near and far,
He made, and keeps them what they are.
Nor asks it intellect refined
Nor effort of the reasoning mind
To read His lore ; the wise may miss,
The simple find, their way to this.
A reverent heart is all it asks :—
To such beneath her myriad masks
Nature her hidden Lord displays,
Ceaselessly vocal with His praise.

A ROYAL LEGACY

Feb. 2, 1901

OUR loss to-day, dear Queen, is largely gain :—
A new ideal granted to mankind,
A pattern of rare contrasts :— power combined
With minute care ; a richly-cultured brain
With sweet simplicity ; unquestioned reign
O'er teeming millions, yet a will resigned
Always to Heaven ; a guarded life and mind
That knew, and in thy courtiers brooked, no stain
Thine the true greatness that could stoop, as He
Stooped who was God incarnate, to the needs
And heart-aches of the lowliest, yet retained
His just prerogative of Majesty :
So met, Victoria, in thy Christlike deeds
Imperial grace and sympathy unfeigned.

CORONATION-DAY OF KING EDWARD VII

June 26, 1902

God save our gracious King !
Let all the Empire sing
 “ God save the King ! ”
Joy to King Edward's reign !
Wide over land and main
Echo the glad refrain
 “ God save the King ! ”

Fling, all ye breezes, fling
On your world-circling wing
 “ God save the King ! ”
Trumpet and booming gun
Welcome his rule begun ;
Hail, good Victoria's son !
 “ God save the King ! ”

Bells in your towers swing,
Proudly and sweetly ring
 “ God save the King ! ”

High to the welkin float
 As from one mighty throat
 Loud cheer and music's note,—
 "God save the King !"

Organ and tuneful string
 Swell the day's triumphing
 "God save the King !"
 Flags wreathed with blossoms rare
 Ruffle the scented air ;
 Beacon-flames flash and flare
 "God save the King !"

Let every loyal thing
 Its proper tribute bring ;
 God save the King !
 Heir of the queenliest Queen
 England or earth has seen,
 Keep thou her memory green,
 Kingliest King !

By Truth and Mercy wring
 Praise e'en from Envy's sting,
 Edward our King ;—
 God's royal blessing be
 On thy fair Queen and thee
 Now and eternally :
 God save the King !

From your reign's early spring
May you to Heaven cling
 On through its growth ;
And as the years pass by
Work out the purpose high
Of your great destiny :—
 God save you both !

GEORGE RIDDING

(BISHOP OF SOUTHWELL 1884-1904) IN COUNCIL

As they who deal with precious ore, and sift
The metal from its coarse embedding dross ;
So, scornful of the multifarious gloss
Of shallower critics, he essayed to lift
Our minds ('twas his, 'tis scarce another's gift)
To final Truth, steering his speech across
All premature conceits ; not to the loss
Of lesser ends, but gaining the true drift.
If sometimes our dull brains failed, as we heard,
To plumb his meaning,—blamed it as obscure,—
We found it later when the printed word
Was read at leisure ; then it came out pure,
Strong and inspiring, and our hearts were stirred
With some new sense of thought at last mature.

SUNSET IN DARLEY DALE

May 30, 1905

SEE how the windows blaze on Riber's height,
On the scarred Knabb what rosy tints prevail !
And as the eye roams round the Southern dale
All the hill-pastures sleep in golden light
From Masson's crowning grove to where the sight
Rests over Wensley—ah, how soon to pale !
The kindling fires already fade and fail,
And lovely day melts into lovely night.
Shades gather fast where Oker's lonely tree
Looks down upon its deep-embosomed combe ;
And on God's Acre broods a tender gloom,
White crosses gleaming dim ; and silently
One guards for me earth's dearest spot, while life
And memory last, where sleepest thou, my wife.

SACRED SUBJECTS

“ A verse may find him who a sermon flies.”

—GEORGE HERBERT.

A few of the verses in this section are reprinted, with some emendations, from "The Resurrection, and other Poems," published in 1878. The remainder may be considered as a Supplement to that volume.

F. A.

“THE FULNESS OF THE TIMES”

DAUGHTER of Zion, hark !

Hear'st not the rising sound

That freshens breeze-like from yon eastern bound

Where the new dawn is struggling with the dark ?

Awake, awake—and let its music clear

Strike on thy listening ear.

Hark how they rise and swell,

Those whispers of the Past !

All down the ages rolls the volume vast

And frames one voice—“ He comes, Emmanuel,

The child whom through unnumbered years of gloom

Time bare within her womb.”

Now are the days full-ripe ;

The Promise of Earth's youth

Takes living substance, moulding into truth

Vague hope, prophetic glimpse, and mystic type :

All, all is ready—see, the shadows break :—

Zion, awake, awake !

Now has Rome's iron rod
Welded the world in one ;
Her work of seven long centuries is done ;
Closed is the temple of the two-faced god,
From East to West the throes of conquest cease
Hushed in a world-wide peace.

Is it the goddess blind
That thus prepares a stage
For mercy's conquest in the coming Age
And boundless fellowship of humankind ?
Nay, the Desire of Nations thus hath wrought
Beyond His agents' thought.

Thou, mighty power of Rome,
Hast done thy Master's will,
Unwitting that His plans thou didst fulfil
From the first day when from thy narrow home
Thou wentest forth, in ever-widening sweep
Thy triumphs vast to reap :

To make the King's highway
From Britain's new-found isle
To where the sunny plains of India smile
Hard by the portals of the orient day,
Thine was the mission to prepare the earth
For her Redeemer's birth.

Nor less to thee, fair Greece,
Was noble share assigned
In God's great world-scheme—to instruct the mind,
And train it, nurtured in the arts of peace
Born of thy native beauty, to behold
Beauty of higher mould.

Thine, too, to teach the tongue
Those charms of eloquence
Whereby the soul, rapt beyond carnal sense,
To faith and high endeavour may be strung ;
Words that should breathe, when touched with fire
Divine,
A truer lore than thine.

Thus did your powers converge,
Fair Greece, and lordly Rome,
To one great purpose till the Christ should come
To claim the homage of your gifts, and merge
For evermore all scattered rays in one
Glorious unsetting sun.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

SHEPHERDS ere the break of day
On the mountain pastures lay ;
Stretched at ease upon the sod
 Watched they while their charge was sleeping ;
 And above, by thousands peeping,
Shone the quiet stars of God :—
Nought to break the silence deep
But the breathing of the sheep.

Then, as sudden on their eyes
As the lightning cleaves the skies,
Broke an unexpected morn—
 Seraph-form like diamond flaming,
 Seraph-voice aloud proclaiming,
“ Christ the Saviour, Christ is born !
Haste to seek Him where He lies,
David's Heir, in rude disguise.”

Not more swiftly flies the shaft
Sped by some strong archer's craft
Than those shepherds haste away,

To approve the wondrous story
Told with such display of glory—
There in swaddling-clothes He lay
All among the stalléd kine,
Christ, the Heir of David's line !

Hark ! again the Noël bells
Echo round the hills and dells,
Waking with their joyous din
Every heart to love and gladness,
Ringing out despair and sadness,
Ringing Christ the Saviour in :
Come and seek Him, Christian men,
Come and seek Him once again !

EPIPHANY

S. MATTHEW v. 16 ; EPH. iii. 10.

O CHRIST, when veiled in mortal flesh
Thy Godhead dwelt with men,
From day to day flashed forth afresh
Its glory on their ken.

New powers till then unseen, unheard,
Proclaimed Thy heavenly birth :
Emmanuel, the Father's Word,
Had pitched His tent on earth.

Nor sudden was that Light's eclipse
When Thou from earth wert gone ;
Awhile on Apostolic lips
The glory lingered on :

A glory, not their own but Thine,
Shone forth in works of love,
For faith and prayer by chains Divine
Linked them with Thee above.

But, one by one, their mission o'er,
Thou took'st them to their rest,
And to the eye of sense no more
Thy glory was expressed.

Comes now no gleam, no voice is heard,
'Tis dark and silent all,
Save where through rite or written word
Faith hears Thy secret call.

But once again on human eyes
Shall burst the vision clear,
And angel-borne through flaming skies
Thy dazzling Form appear.

O Master, can it be Thy will
That through these quiet days,—
Whilst Thou art absent from us still
And our last doom delays,—

That we in fruitless faith suppress
The Light our spirits see,
Boast of the record and confess
The Epiphany to be,

Yet never seek from hearts renewed
To spread that Light abroad?
Lit up with wisdom myriad-hued
Should we not shine for God?

Surely, incarnate in Thine own,
With various gifts for each,
Still would'st Thou make Thy glory known
In Christlike deed and speech.

Oh that we might with loving care
Do this Thy great command,
That all might see the Light we bear
And bless the kindling Hand.

Alas, how infinitely poor
Our best endeavours are,
What earthly aims our souls immure,
What sins our service mar !

Lord, hearken as our faults we own,
And when Thou hear'st, forgive ;
And help us in Thy Light alone
Henceforth to work and live ;

So up to Heaven the news should spread,
And angels too should know
That even on earth God's Light is shed,
God's Life is lived below.

A QUESTION FOR HOLY WEEK

S. JOHN xiii. 25 ; S. MATT. xxvi. 22

“WHO is it, LORD?” in one griefstricken cry
The tremulous voices vie ;
Again and yet again
From hearts misgiving bursts the sad refrain,
“LORD, is it I?”

O true and tender-hearted, in whose ear
Love’s warning sounds so clear,
And straight on your own ways
Bends down that keen self-scrutinising gaze
In holy fear !

So, Christ, forbid that overweening pride
Me from myself should hide !
Hear I another’s sin,
Let wakeful conscience her stern work begin
Mine own to chide ;

At lightest whisper may my spirit learn
Inwards her eye to turn ;
And in all rankest weeds,
Since in her dark depths lurk the selfsame seeds,
Herself discern.

I would not be too hasty to descry
Motes in my brother's eye,
Lest haply I presume
Like David, by my own too righteous doom
Adjudged to die.

Not on the still lake's bosom moon and star
More clearly mirrored are,
Than the least evil deed
On our swift-judging minds,—save when we plead
At our own bar !

O let me ne'er forget, great Judge Divine,
That I must plead at Thine !
Unstable as the sea
To self-distrust, good LORD, and trust in Thee
My heart incline.

THURSDAY BEFORE EASTER

S. JOHN xiii. 30

'Tis night :—not dark, for through this humble room
The festal lamps diffuse their radiance bright ;
Nor dark within these faithful hearts, on whom
Shines inwardly the world's unchanging Light.
'Tis night :—not dark without ; though late the hour,
Through Zion's streets the pilgrim myriads stray
Where o'er God's courts gleam pinnacle and tower
Bathed in the Paschal moonlight bright as day.
'Tis night :—ah, night how dark ! black as deep Hell,
In that seared soul that on damnation's edge
Durst take and eat, unflinching, Love's last pledge :
O living lie, O craft inscrutable,
Even to the end veiled from all mortal sight,
Gone forth at last ! gone into endless night.

GOOD FRIDAY

“Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?”

A HOLIDAY, a day of sport and glee,
A holiday,—ah, not a Holy Day!
In festive garb, lighthearted, loud and gay,
The world makes merry round the accursed tree!
Was it for this our forefathers set free
These hours from common toils,—that men might play
And banish from their bosoms quite away
Not worldly cares, but all solemnity?
O man, who revellest this sacred morn,
Whate'er thy sin, whate'er thy sorrow be,
For them those Hands were pierced, that Brow was torn,
Thy burden borne which none could bear but HE.
Wilt thou not look? wilt thou pass by in scorn?
'Tis JESUS hangs there, and He died for thee.

CALVARY

AROUND this spot whereon our sin was purged
By worthier offering than of bulls or goats,
Devotion still on wings of memory floats,
Even as to it all old-world hopes converged.
Know, sinner, from what hopeless debt emerged
Thy soul, when in mysterious sacrifice
Thy Creditor laid down in Blood the price
Of the full quittance His own justice urged !
Bethink thee, and esteem this Sacred Hill
Heaven's School of Charity ; here consecrate
To Love all gifts and powers, all worldly state,
And to this Cross nail thankfully thy will ;
Here Self was nought ; O man, nought be it still,
All swallowed up in Love so passing great !

THE MUFFLED PEAL

SLEEPS he in Christ? Oh, sorrow not as those
Who sorrow without hope ! Fresh garlands bring,
Sweet violets, and all glad gifts of Spring
That slept but now beneath sepulchral snows :—
They seemed to die ; they did but in repose
Gather new strength and beauty. So the King
Of flowers and men and each created thing
Lay down in death, and gloriously uprose.
Listen how in those sympathetic bells,—
Their changeful note, now joyous, now subdued,—
Hope strives with grief ; and each by turns excels,
Till both are blended in one peaceful mood,
And seem like welcomes of a multitude
Far off, commingling with earth's last farewells.

ASCENSION-TIDE

O MYSTERY of Love Divine,
How hast Thou for our wants sufficed,
Since GOD and Man in Thee combine,
Two natures in One perfect Christ !

While still thy Godhead reigned above
Thy Manhood toiled and wept below,
And earth was warmed with heavenly Love,
And Heaven was thrilled with earthly woe.

And now within the veil returned,
God linked with Man for evermore,
The sympathy by suffering learned
Enhances all Thou wert before.

Henceforth, of every human smart,
Soon as Thy Manhood feels the pang
Thy Godhead probes the wounded heart,
And tracks the sorrow whence it sprang.

Thou canst, and wilt, in all our need
Supply the help none other can ;
Thou canst, for Thou art God indeed,
Thou wilt, for Thou art very Man.

O God and Man, O loving Christ,
Our mighty aid, our gentle Friend,
Ne'er be our hearts from Thee enticed,
But save and keep us to the end.

“WHY STAND YE GAZING UP
INTO HEAVEN ?”

ACTS i. 11

WHY strain your eyes into yon distant blue ?
 Snapt is the earthly bond
 That knit your Lord and you ;
And He is passed into the Light beyond.

Now must a subtler fellowship begin,
 And ye yourselves shall know
 Closer to Him akin
Than when in flesh He lived with you below.

Think how He spake : “ My kindred in the flesh,
 Not these true kindred are ;
 Flesh dies, henceforth afresh
Shall grow a oneness time nor death can mar.

“ A hidden unity, where will and heart
 Have answered to My call ;
 That tie no force can part,
In Me all such shall live, and I in all.”

S. JUDE

“Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”—S. JOHN xiv. 22, 23.

Not on the world, but where I trace,
In simple souls and true,
Welcome sincere, my waiting grace
Shall light as doth the dew;

And as the dewdrop on the grass
Reflects the orb of day,
So Heaven's own Love Itself shall glass
On hearts that love and pray.

LATE DAFFODILS

LENT lilies here at Whitsuntide !
Has Nature ceased to be our guide,
Suggesting by what growth she yields,
Diverse in Spring and Summer fields,
Progressive lessons, one by one,
What should be thought, or what be done ?
Must we, to suit her indolence,
Put back the hands of time to whence
They passed six weeks ago, when Lent
Called us to sorrow and repent ?
Shall we forget the after-joy
That Easter brought, and still employ
Our souls in thoughts of what we seemed
Ere yet we saw ourselves redeemed,
Before the Cross and vanquished grave
Had told of One at hand to save,
Who now at this glad time imparts
New life, new power, to nerve our hearts ?
No ! Nature so at strife with grace,
Handmaid to mistress must give place,
And all must help our hopes to lift
To God's great Pentecostal Gift.

Yet nought comes purposeless, and ye
Late lilies have a voice for me :—
By your familiar sight and scent
My memory wanders back to Lent,
But wanders by a pathway strown
With many a flower that since has blown,
Such flowers as hope delights to weave
In coronals on Whitsun Eve ;
With these your Lenten fragrance blends,
And in one breath to Heaven ascends :
The sum—ye bid me not forget,
Though saved, I am a sinner yet.

TO-DAY

“Think that this day will never dawn again.”

—DANTE'S *Purgatorio* (Longfellow's translation), xii. 84.

O THOU who countest life a time for play,
Write up this motto where it may remain
To meet thine eye as saith each opening day,
“I shall not dawn again.”

Alas, of all past days our Master lent
As links to fashion in one golden chain
Of watchful service, and on self were spent,
Not one can come again.

Nought can we, LORD, but free forgiveness ask
For chances given and lost, now mourned in vain.
Brace Thou our wills to-day for this day's task ;
Ne'er will it dawn again.

Unlooked-for calls 'twill bring ; ourselves foreknow
Its common dues of hand and tongue and brain ;
Be these and those met bravely ere it go
Never to come again :

To fight some old temptation, heal some strife,
Speak timely warning, ease some sufferer's pain,
Bring light and hope into some darkened life
To-day, but not again :

Thy mercy, Spirit of wisdom, we entreat ;
This burning thought inspire us to retain,
That each day's trial, in itself complete,
Comes once, nor comes again :

Do we what good lies nearest, small or great,
Bear we what cross may come, and not complain ;
So shall each day to Thee be consecrate
Though it comes not again.

'Twill never dawn again ! Oh, in our ears
Be echoed, morn by morn, this solemn strain
To quicken zeal and wake heart-searching fears :
“ 'Twill never dawn again ! ”

By stages unperceived how drift away
Our little lives, and powers of service wane,
Unused and atrophied, till work nor day
Can come to us again !

Our days—they come and pass, how cheaply priced !
In thoughtless folly spent, or proud disdain,
“Days of the Son of man,” each lent by Christ,
 Ne’er to be lent again :

And one will come when work can be no more ;
When all seeds, good or vile, have grown to grain,
And God’s strong angels have shut-to the door
 That opens not again.

CHRIST'S METHOD

S. MARK iv. 33 ; S. JOHN xvi. 12

So with a clear eye to their final good
The Master fed His babes with milk, not meat :
For how should spirit, more than flesh, complete
Its healthy growth by undigested food ?
By word and act adapted to the mood
And mind of the hearers, patient and discreet
He taught them : as when, kneeling at their feet,
His lowly love made itself understood.
Christ, teach Thy servants this simplicity,
Lest, forcing in their inconsiderate haste
On sensebound minds or inexperienced youth
(As though than Wisdom they would wiser be)
The deeper lessons of Thy holy Truth,
Their truest teaching fail and run to waste.

CHRIST'S MIRACLES

THEY err who in Christ's wonders think to trace
Capricious violence to natural laws.

Take the plain truth : before the Master's face
The servant in humility withdraws.

When that strong Will, which is the vital cause
Of all things, wrought in man a little space,

All forces less than His were held in pause,
And Nature owned the higher law of Grace.

And what are we who question it ?—O Thou,
Whose blinding glory the old Hebrew seer

Once saw with trembling, and the Seraphim
Veiling their faces ; not less glorious now

To them the vision ! but to us how dim

It shines ; and but Thine outmost skirts appear.

SIMON OF CYRENE

O HAPPY thou, whom fancy paints
Discerned among thy fellow-saints
By one inimitable gem
That glitters in thy diadem,
Unenvied, though to thee alone
Of men redeemed the grace be shown
To wear that crown none other shares,
Decreed thee by thy Lord and theirs.
Like thee, along the way He went
They bore what cross the Saviour sent,—
Their cross :—thy special glory is,
Thou took'st not only thine, but His.
That very Wood already stained
With blood from His pure forehead drained,
That Wood which in the darkened sky
Should quiver with His dying cry,
That wooden Cross thy shoulder bare
Thy suffering Saviour's pain to share :
On thee, thee only, was bestowed
The grace of lightening His load,

Feeling in bruised and tortured limb
The actual weight that pressed on Him.
Ah, who in that eternal rest,
Where all alike are wholly blest,
Can grudge thee that thy brow should wear
One little gem none else may share ?

APOLLOS

ACTS xviii. 24-28

THE priests in Nature's temple learned
Their noble lore by slow degrees :
One truth was here, one there discerned,
And one by those, and one by these ;
And one by one the truths were purged
By patient toil of many a mind,
Till on the centre all converged,
And fact by fact stood out defined.
Then speech to knowledge they would add,
And teach the world the truth they had,
Yet, teaching, knew themselves half-blind ;
There was a something that they missed,—
Some deeper truth must still exist,—
They could not see the law behind.

By rigid science they could prove
The paths wherein the planets move ;
They knew, nor aught could shake the fact
Or make their knowledge more exact ;
But still, the Why they could not tell
Till our great Newton, pondering, saw

How to the earth the apple fell,
And grasped the reconciling law.
How clear, by that one flash, became
The secrets of this mighty frame !
No more they saw the planets roll
As separate objects to the eye,
But all in their diversity
Conjoined in one majestic whole,
While each pursued its several course
Obedient to the central force.

So, in a nobler temple still,
As knowledge grew from more to more,
Did men with prayer and thought and skill
Build up the mass of Sacred lore.
One truth was here, one there revealed,
Each leading to a higher stage,
As vision, insight, voice might yield
New matter for the inspired page ;
Historian, psalmist, prophet, sage,
Found larger regions to explore ;
And man to man, and age to age,
Passed down the evergrowing store.

And thou, Apollos, thou hadst known
That Word, and made it all thine own.
By God's own Hand the living seed
Within thy tender heart was sown ;
And thou thyself by timely heed,

And faithful culture of thy youth,
Hadst learnt the perfect sum of Truth
To which the latest age had grown.
Thy patriot zeal had loved to trace
The story of thy father's race ;
Abraham's faith, and Moses' law,
And David's reign, who dimly saw
A vaster glory than his own,
That streamed from an Eternal Throne ;
The rites of Aaron's priestly line ;
Prophetic hint, and mystic sign,
Obscure foreshowings of the Christ,
Bright promises unrealised,
Rich heritage of hopes sublime
That fed upon that faithful Word
Still unrepealed, though long deferred,
Which heralded the golden time :—
Such glorious framework all was thine,
Its spirit ?—Thou wert yet a child,
Thy knowledge all unreconciled ;
Thou knew'st but this,—'twas all Divine.

And He Who gave thee wit to find
This wealth of truth, and in thy mind
To store it till the dawn should break,
And thou upon the perfect view
As from a glowing dream shouldst wake
To find the fancy more than true,—
He Who had helped thee thus to reach
The knowledge, lent thee powers of speech,

The orator's persuasive charm,
The eloquence which now can calm,
And now instruct, and now inspire
With purpose high and strong desire ;
So should not thy committed trust
Bless but thyself, or idly hide
Its virtues in ignoble rust,
But shower its gifts on every side
That truth might flourish far and wide.

But what avail these splendid gains
Of knowledge won by prayer and pains ?
What boots it that thy fluent tongue
To sweetest melody be strung,
If he who sings, and they who hear,
See only Truth's half-darkened sphere ;
Nor find more life in what is sung
Than wont to thrill some ancient seer :
If nought be sung beyond the scope
Of that old-world prophetic strain
Which, dying out in words of hope,
Woke but to words of hope again :
If still thy straining vision fail
To penetrate within the veil !

As when the rising sun has kissed
The heavy banks of brooding mist,
And glorified them with the ray
Which soon will melt them all away :—

So now, upon the thoughts that roll
In dim confusion through thy soul
The Sun of Truth begins to smite,
And floods them with a sea of light.
But even as 'tis no chance draws forth
The cold night vapours from the earth,
But he, the selfsame glorious sun
Who melts them when their work is done :
So shalt thou learn that not by chance
Arose those thoughts and hopes confused
On which thy mind through life has mused ;
That not one part or circumstance
Of that through which thy knowledge grew
But came from Him Who through the night
Still wrought, and now bursts forth to light
To quicken and make all things new.
The clouds that o'er thy spirit brood
Bore, every one, its gift of good ;
And though the sun that now has burst
Shall melt them, one by one, away,
His work they did ; and He will stay
To kiss them ere they be dispersed.
The Christ has risen, the world's true Sun,
The all-enlightening glorious orb
Who doth all lesser lights absorb,
Who is all lesser lights in one ;
For never shone the light so dim
But caught its feeble rays from Him.
Now go thou forth with thankful heart
For all thou hast and all thou art ;

Draw out the treasures from thy store
Of ancient Israel's hoarded lore ;
With such a zeal as fired thy youth
To labour in the fruitful task
Of study, haste thou now to ask
The meaning of the embodied Truth ;
Right well thou know'st its outward form,
To know its spirit now begin,—
No more a clay-cold corpse, but warm
With life—the living Christ within.
Know now why God has given thee speech :
Thy brothers to instruct, entreat,
Warn, comfort, with persuasion sweet
The riches of His love to teach ;
And, with the cords most meet for each,
To draw them to their Saviour's feet.

FELIX

ACTS xxiv.

THOU dar'st not say, "Since life began
I knew not to tell good from ill,
To set 'I ought' against 'I will'":—
GOD made thee not a brute, but man.

What though for thee no uttered voice
Pealed its loud thunders from the mount,
Nor written word from Wisdom's fount
Was offered for thy spirit's choice,

Two teachers hadst thou :—one within,
Thy better self, and one without,
Creation's witness ; all about,
Signs of a Good for man to win.

There were who read those signs, who saw
Darkly, but not in vain, a Hand
That worked for good, a Power that planned
Their lives to keep that inward law.

Men born, as thou, in unblest climes
Where all conspired to crush the right,
Still caught some glimmer of that light
Whose fulness bathes these later times.

And why not thou? What blanched thy cheek,
Whence came that spark of shame, when hint
Of coming judgment struck thy flint
As now thou heard'st thy prisoner speak?

That spark condemns thy life's whole sum,
Tells of good knowledge self-confined;
Lay it not always in thy mind?
Thy will bade slumber, kept it dumb.

But lo, thou canst no more control;
God's hammer strikes, and fiery red
It flashes forth. Oh, let it spread
And flood with penitence thy soul!

Canst not? Alas, thou canst! Not He
That made, can force, a human will;
'Tis ours, through all life's trial, still
To take the good or let it be.

"Not yet," I hear thee plead, "not now!
Time lacks; let be convenient space;
Another day may find more place"—
Another day? And what if thou

Before another day have dawned
Be gone from earth, in the outer gloom
To curse thy folly, wait the doom
Of grace despised, sin vainly warned ?

This is thy chance, may be thy last ;
Now may'st thou snap thy chains, find peace :
Act, act ! before the summons cease,
God's patience flag, and hope be past.

We cannot choose our times. We can
Use or misuse them ; but they fall
As Wisdom wills to each and all ;—
To know them is the test of man.

THE IMMORTALITY OF LOVE

1 COR. xiii. 13

FAITH describes our home afar
While we wander here below ;
Hope is now a friendly star
Lighting all the way we go.
What is Faith to those who know ?
Soars she not beyond the veil ;
Lost in Heaven's transcendent glow
Hope's dim starlight waxes pale.
When we see God eye to eye
All but Love must fade and die.

Substance of life's brightest dream,
Parent of all grace beside,
Love, in earth and Heaven supreme,
Fails not, but,—as silver tried
Is refined and purified,—
Sifted of its earthly dross
Love in Heaven shall still abide,
Sole survivor of earth's loss :—
How should Love a mortal prove ?
God still lives, and God is Love.

BROKEN RESOLUTIONS

MEMORY, thy working passes all our wit :
How suddenly thy lightning scathes our joy !
The orphaned mother, whom home-cares employ
About her house, has unawares alit
On some poor trivial thing wherewith are knit
Thoughts of the buried past,—some book or toy,—
Ah, see those gushing tears ;—“ My boy, my boy !
For your dear sake my sorrow cherished it.”
So unexpected are the thoughts that flit
Across our idle moments ; bringing back,
Through doors mysterious that no key will fit,
Hopes of our youth, now dead ; vows lightly spoken ;
Resolves of good, no sooner made than broken,
And air-built castles, long since gone to wrack.

MATERIALISM

You will hold nought, you say, but that which lies
Right in your path : what sight and touch can test ;
Here sensebound you are well content to rest,
To airier heights you hope nor care to rise.
Beseech you, tell me : are these hands and eyes
Our only organs ? or if unconfessed
Old truths, half seen as through a palimpsest,
Visit our minds,—to scorn them, is it wise ?
Is man no other than his sheep or ox
That lives unheeding, and unheeded dies ?
Then, since there is I know not what that mocks
This brutish privilege, and hourly plies
With strange misgivings, 'twere a glad surprise
If we might exchange places with our flocks.

S. PAUL AT ATHENS

PROUD city, consecrate to human Thought,
Athens, its birthplace and metropolis,
What presage of success was, surely, his
Who to thy Schools the newborn Gospel brought :
Here where earth's keenest intellects had sought
The True, the Ideal Beauty ; that which Is
Through that which seems, the baffling mysteries
Which Socrates discussed and Plato taught :
Oh, what a soil was here wherein to sow
His heavenly seed ! how would the Word be prized
That unveiled all they vainly longed to know :—
The Incarnate Truth, the Ideal realised !
Alas, poor human wisdom, Truth Divine
To sinful souls asks other ways than thine.

HINDOO RELIGION

Is it some lost tradition doth control
Those dusky dreamers of the ancient East
To teach that man, once from the flesh released,
Shall merge his separate being in the Whole?
Or is it that instinctively the Soul,
As waters seek the level of their source,
Feels that from viewless heights began her course,
And vaguely knows that there must be her goal?
So towards the light those contemplative minds
Reaching, fall short; yet touch the outer rim:
For God, our Author, is our End: in Him
Our being its true consummation finds.
Fruitless half-truth,—right in the general plan,
They miss the Living God, the personal Man.

THE LESSON OF JACOB'S LIFE

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel."

—GEN. xxxii. 28

JACOB, if with too microscopic ken
Our eyes should mark the errors of thy youth,
Keen to descry those weaker moments when
Self-love o'erleapt the sacred bounds of truth,
'Twere sin against that kindly law of ruth
Which bids us veil the faults of fallen men,
As knowing that like judgment us pursu'th
As that we judge, rendering our own again.
More generous task be ours! to trace the art
Of that Divine Physician Who through pain
Purged out those ulcers from thy nobler part,
And on the well-healed scar wrote large and plain
That all might read:—"He doeth all things well
Who of a Jacob makes an Israel."

EPHPHATHA

S. MARK vii. 34

“HE sighed.” Even He Who could all ills control,
For the outward suffering spake of blight within ;
In every pain His eye pierced, past the goal
Of human vision, to the thought of sin.
Then, gently leading him beyond the din
Of the rude crowd, he touched and made him whole.
So still, kind Saviour, seekest thou to win
Thy secret conquest in the insensate soul.
Apart in the sick chamber’s solitude
Thy Spirit easiest works :—the palsied tongue
To prayer and praise unwonted is unstrung,
And the dull ear with keener sense endued.
Both ear and tongue are dead to things divine ;
Speak but Thine “Ephphatha” :—they both are Thine.

“WHOM THE LORD LOVETH HE CHASTENETH ”

HEB. xii. 6

SWEET is the world ere life begins to fade,
While earth still wears her fair deceitful mask,
And pleasure's votaries securely bask
In sunshine chequered by no chilling shade.
Let no ill chance their paradise invade,
Let each day bring its light congenial task,
Each night its quiet sleep ; no more they ask ;
On these frail props their peace is fully stayed.
Come, holy grief, in mercy break the charm !
Let burst on them those constellations new
Of heavenly hopes, and joys serene and calm,
Soul-chastening thoughts which the world's glare
denied :
As, when the sunset fires have waned and died,
God's stars creep out upon the darkening blue.

“THESE MY BRETHREN, EVEN THESE LEAST”

S. MATT. xxv. 40 (R.V.)

THE words Thou spakest and the deeds Thou didst
Live on ; and all Thy lifelong sacrifice
Still bears its fruit. Nay, Thou, beyond our eyes
Enthroned in heaven, still walkest in our midst ;
For as in poverty Thou sometime hidst
Thy Godhead's glory, so, beneath the guise
Of friendless grief and pain we recognise
Thy suffering Form, as Thou, dear Master, bidst.
In many a lonely garret blank and bare
Still may we find Thee ; in downtrodden lives,
And prison-cell, and fever-stricken den,
And hospital, and hungry home, and where
The unfeeling world crowds thick its busy hives
With pale-faced children and uncared-for men.

CONTINUITY

'Tis said that with approaching rain,
Or thunder-heat, or pinching frost,
The foot or finger long since lost
Feels twinges of accustomed pain.

Nor, pondering, can we count it strange ;
For wounds received in childhood smart
Though flesh and nerve in every part
Have suffered oft their seven years' change.

And who may doubt the Maker's aim
Who orders this experience,
This continuity of sense
Apart from the material frame ?

Sensation in the severed limb !
Oh, tells it not this solemn truth,
That every man's forgotten youth
Still is, and must be, part of him :—

That all that has been shall be, when
The form to which his spirit clings
Has perished, and all earthly things
Have passed for ever from his ken ?

Our life is an unbroken whole :

Flesh fails ; but we live on, and weave
From self's first dawn to self's last eve
The garment of the undying soul.

O Thou, our Hope, whate'er befall,

Whate'er our past or present be,
We ask but to be found in Thee
Whose boundless merit covers all.

THE EVENING OF CONFIRMATION DAY

YOUNG hopeful heart, pure heart, not spoilt as yet
 By vain regret ;
Who still canst tremble at the law's alarms ;
 On whose fair brow still lingers uneffaced
 The mystic sign of fealty, on it traced
When Faith first laid thee in thy Father's arms.

Blest wert thou then : more blest when now thy voice
 Has sealed the choice,
And thine own will confessed that Father's claim :
 Thy prayer has pierced the heavens, and through
 the rift
 Descends—oh doubt it not!—the sevenfold gift
Which lighted once in Pentecostal flame.

Cherish within thee all that thou hast felt
 While rapt we knelt
And breathed our souls for thee,—we who have known
 With what array of foes thy life must cope :—
 Brace thee to meet their brunt, nor dare to hope
Man's common lot shall change for thee alone.

Ah, not too often comes that softened feeling
 That o'er thee stealing
 Made thine eyes glisten and thy bosom swell;
 'Tis something to have felt!—'tis more to know
 How to retain undimmed the unwonted glow;—
 Yet even in passing to have felt, is well.

'Tis something,—may be much. Comes not for nought
 One transient thought;
 There is a unity in these our lives:
 Our paths no heaven-sent gleam has idly crossed,
 No joy, once really clasped, is wholly lost;
 In memory's depths, though slumbering, it survives:

Some hymn, some phrase, is unto thee henceforth
 Fraught with new worth:
 It shall come back to thee in far-off years;
 And trembling tearful vows, now made in vain,
 Shall rise as from the tomb; and once again
 Those vows shall be renewed, perhaps those tears.

Then go thou forth undaunted; not unarmed,
 No life is charmed!
 Trust not the feeling: life is given for toil;
 Turn feeling into action, labour on
 Trustful and watchful, till thy work be done,
 And God absolve thee from this fleshly coil.

LIVING FAITH

S. LUKE viii. 46

WHATEVER cobwebs our poor logic weaves,
Each human soul holds, consciously, the key
Of its own destiny : created free,
Free it remains, though warped, until it leaves
This brief probation. Round the Saviour heaves
A surging crowd ; so close they press that He
With words and looks of tenderest sympathy
Can reach all ears and eyes ; yet none receives
His benediction. Then one faithful soul
Comes into living contact with His Will :—
The Fount is opened ! and the electric thrill
Of healing grace has made the sufferer whole :—
A parable, wherein the secret lies
Of Prayer and Sacramental Mysteries.

FAITH AND WORKS

ROM. iii. 28 ; S. JAMES ii. 24

GREAT Spirit, Who through human speech
Thy truth to men confidest,
Not all to all, but part to each,
The message Thou dividest ;
Yet on our ears their words should fall
Not part on each, but all on all.

But oft the favourite word we choose,
Its fellow-word decrying ;
And, maiming both, the whole we lose
While on the part relying.
So would our folly make divorce
'Twixt Love the stream, and Faith the source.

Yet vain the Faith, and vain the Hope,
That builds on heated feeling ;
True faith is but a telescope
Our hidden life revealing :
A hand that clasps the Hand that gives
All power whereby man feels,—and lives.

New Life—not rapture—is the test
That Christ our Lord requireth ;
For labourers is the promised rest
To which true faith aspireth ;
We've sterner work to do below
Than dreaming in ecstatic glow.

To follow where our Leader trod
The path of self-denial,
To do and bear the will of God,
Here lies our daily trial :
In these the Christ Himself will shine,
True mirrors of the Life Divine.

DISCONTENT

S. LUKE xvii. 17

THOSE nine who leprous came, and clean returned,
How self-complacently our hearts condemn
The blindness which no ray of Love discerned,—
No love responsive in their bosoms burned ;—
“ We would not be like them ! ”

Yet leprous were we all, and the same Love
Cleansed us in childhood from our nature's stain ;
And, day by day, if penitent we prove,
Though much polluted, mercy from above
Still cleanses us again.

And does not mercy compass all our ways ?
Trials may come, will come, for Truth has said
That chastisement our Father's Love displays ;
Through all life's conflict sorrows were the bays
That wreathed our Captain's head.

And look around ! Whatever be our place,
Save in the lowest depths of human ill,
See we not myriads in far harder case
Bearing their burdens with a quiet grace
And meek submissive will ?

Think of the broken hearts, the ruined lives,¹
Victims of fraud, condemned to lowliest lot
By others' sins,—for whom no hope survives
Of justice ; yet the sufferers wear their gyves
In patience, murmuring not :

The dreary homes, where workers weak and old
For scantiest pittance at their poor employ,
All vain repinings manfully controlled,
Toil far into the night, in dark and cold,
Without one earthly joy.

Picture the burning tears in silence shed
In some mean garret rank and dirt-defiled,
Where in its little coffin, newly dead,
Lies stark and gaunt, and lost for want of bread,
The mourner's only child.

O words how weak ! Our thankless lives are spent
In sunshine that ne'er cheers that hapless crowd ;
How dare we let our selfish gloom find vent
In fretfulness and peevish discontent
For every passing cloud ?

¹ See R. C. Trench, quoted in Bishop Paget's "Spirit of Discipline," pp. 64, 65.

Look we on Him Whose self-inflicted loss

Won hope of Heaven for us and every man,
Turned all earth's pains to gold, earth's gold to dross ;—
And then, with eyes fixt on His love-crowned Cross,
Live thankless, if we can !

“ IDLE WORDS ”

S. MATT. xii. 36, 37

WE watched the vessel as they shipped her bales,
'Twas but this morning, on the noisy quay ;
Another hour, and she was far at sea :
And now, look yonder where her gleaming sails
Scarce top the horizon ; ah, how fast she fails,—
She's gone !—We shall forget her—Meanwhile she
Speeds on her way. But, with new company
And a new freight, one day the homeward gales
Will waft her back to us. And so, my friend,
Fare forth the light words of our daily speech,
Laden with evil or with good, and reach
Beyond our grasp ; returning in the end
Deep-stored with their due recompense, to meet
Our startled memory at the Judgment-seat.

TRUTH IN DEATH

THE pale dawn glimmering through the close-drawn
blind

Lit up the features of the dead man's face ;

And, as I stood and gazed a little space,

Lo, every lineament came out defined

As I had known him in the years behind :

Death's cunning chisel had destroyed all trace

Of art and passion, carving in their place

The perfect portrait of his native mind.

O solemn parable ! Thus oft it fares

In the inward man ; our genuine selves to screen

From the world's knowledge is our lifelong task ;

And each gets praise by the false face he wears,

Till drops the curtain on life's closing scene,

And every actor must take off his mask.

HYMNS

QUEEN VICTORIA'S JUBILEE

June 20, 1887

RISE, Britons, rise, and to high heaven
Send up your hymns of praise,
From every land that, far or near,
Victoria's sceptre sways.
Oh, let no heart be cold to-day,
Oh, let no voice be dumb !
It is our good Queen's Festival,
Her Jubilee is come.

God of all grace, Thy gifts to each
Each heart in secret knows,
But now with universal thanks
An Empire's heart o'erflows :
All lips one common boon to own
In one glad concord move,—
Our Queen, a just and virtuous Queen,
Throned in her people's love.

Yea, King of kings, in Thee they stand,
All powers on earth that be ;
Our reverent awe, our loyal love,
Rise up through them to Thee :
By Thee, true Sun of Righteousness,
As planets fair they shine :
Then in their light, if light be ours,
The praise shall all be Thine.

If still beneath Victoria's rule
Peace reigns in all our coasts,
Not her's, not our's, the glory be,
But Thine, great Lord of hosts !
If nobler lives in court or cot
These latest years have known,
'Tis Heaven's reflected light that streams
Down from our Sovereign's throne.

For as soft showers on lofty hills
Feed first the upland heath,
And thence in freshening rills flow down
To enrich the vales beneath :
So when Thy Spirit's dew, good LORD,
Distils on royal domes,
Pure streams from that high vantage-ground
Steal down to humbler homes.

Then, Britons, bless we God supreme,
And for our dear Queen pray
That He through every change and chance
Be still her guide and stay :
And when—her high work done—she lays
Her earthly sceptre down,
Give rest in Thine own kingdom, LORD,
And an unfading crown.

HARVEST THANKSGIVING PROCESSIONAL

1886

LIFT to God your voices,
 Brothers, lift them high !
Is His Hand not o'er us :
 Is His Love not nigh ?
Faithful is His promise,
 Wise His every word ;
Blest the souls that trusting
 Rest upon the LORD !
Lift to God your voices,
 Brothers, lift them high !
Is His Hand not o'er us :
 Is His Love not nigh ?

Lord, on many nations
 Sound Thy judgments forth ;
Comes the cry of famine
 From the frozen North ;
War with all its terrors
 Lingers in the East,

Scarce the earthquake-tremor
In the West has ceased :
Still is sure Thy promise,
Wise Thy every word ;
Blest the souls that trusting
Rest upon the LORD !

Oh, whence comes that England
Still should share Thy smile,
Peace and quiet flourish
In our happy isle ?
Not our strength or foresight,
Not our own deserts,
Nought save Thy forbearance
Harm and death averts.
Lift ye then your voices,
Brothers, lift them high !
For GOD'S Hand is o'er us,
And His Love is nigh.

Though our commerce languish,
Though our harvest store
Still must be replenished
From some distant shore,—
Not the less our praises
Unto GOD we lift ;
More than our deserving
Is our Father's gift ;

Sure for aye His promise,
Wise His every word ;
Blest the souls that trusting
Rest upon the LORD !

God, to Thee be glory,
Maker, Saviour, Guide ;
Heaven and earth Thy fulness
Filleth far and wide.
Lift ye then your voices,
Brothers, lift them high !
For His Hand is o'er us
And His Love is nigh.
Blest the souls that trusting
Rest upon the LORD !
He will be their Portion
And their great Reward.

HARVEST THANKSGIVING PROCESSIONAL

1892

GIVE thanks and sing, O land,
His mercies are renewed
Whose wisdom metes with careful hand
Our yearly food ;
Though on the sickly plant
The ears be thin and raw,
Their growth is ordered, full or scant,
By perfect law.

Thou, LORD, through all our lives
Hast never failed Thine own ;
Not chance our wealth or want contrives,
But Thou alone ;
'Tis Thou Who dost provide
Our blessings, rich or few ;
Then unto Thee, whate'er betide,
Our thanks are due.

Are we so dull and blind,
So dead to things above,
That only in large gifts we find
A Father's love?
What if that love withhold
Earth's treasure from our eyes,
That we the imperishable gold
May learn to prize?

Enough if daily bread
Supply our frugal board;
Not *that* was in the desert spread
For Christ our LORD:
To Him Thou seem'dst to give
Nought but the mocking stone;
For Thou wouldst teach man doth not live
By bread alone.

So in each word of Thine,
Though sharp it sound and stern,
Thy trustful child a Love Divine
Will still discern:
E'en at his worst estate
Thy promise pledged he hath,
And knows that unseen angels wait
About his path.

Then in the darkest days
Our harvest-hymns we'll sing,
And duteous praise to Thee we'll raise,
Our LORD and King.
Though blight be on the plain
And storms blast every hill,
Thou changest not, Thou wilt remain
Our Father still.

HYMN FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE

(MIDNIGHT SERVICE)

ERE yet the year has flown,
Ere yet the year begins,
Come, and before God's mercy-throne
Bewail we all our sins.

See how with outstretched arms
Christ waits to help and save ;
And shall this poor world's dying charms
Our spirits still enslave ?

O heart o'ergrown with weeds,
With passions rank and vile,
For thee His Blood still intercedes,
“ Lord, spare it yet awhile ! ”

“ Hold back Thy doom severe,
Let mercy still find room.
Oh, spare it yet this one more year,
Hold back Thy righteous doom ! ”

O heart, thy bondage break,
Shake free thy fettered will !
And Mercy for her own sweet sake
Shall help and save thee still.

Then with the ransomed host
Shalt thou through endless days
To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Thy thankful tribute raise.

THE END

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